







# **The Islam Series**

**GENERAL EDITOR**

**The Rev. Canon Sell. D.D., M.A., F.R.S.**

## **SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'AN**





SELECTIONS  
FROM THE  
QUR'AN



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## PREFACE

IN this second edition of *Selections from the Qur'án* a good deal of extraneous matter that appeared in the first edition has been omitted. The Arabic names of the Súras have been given. The quotations are made from Rodwell's translation and not from that of Sale. No attempt has been made to interfere with Rodwell's transliteration of proper names, which are left in the extracts given just as he wrote them. The modern and more correct system, now adopted by the Christian Literature Society, will be found in other parts of this work.

\* A list of useful books bearing on the subject of Islám is given at the end of this work.

The Rev. Canon Sell, D.D., who as readers of literature relating to Muḥammadanism will know is an authority on the subject, has very kindly edited the edition, and by so doing has placed the Christian Literature Society under great obligations to him.

JOSEPH PASSMORE.

MADRAS, *April 1910.*



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## INTRODUCTION

**Title.**—The word Qur'án means 'The Reading'. It is also called al-Kítáb, 'The Book', equivalent to Bible. Furqán, 'The Distinguisher', is another title. Some epithet is generally prefixed, as the glorious or noble Qur'án. It is said to have fifty-five titles.

**Divisions.**—The Qur'án is divided into 114 chapters, called súras. The word means 'row' as a line of bricks in a wall; but it now used exclusively for the chapters of the Qur'án. The book is said to contain 338,606 letters, 77,934 words, and 6,616 áyát, or verses.<sup>1</sup> Áyat means a sign, and was the name given by Muḥammad to short sections of the Qur'án. The end of a verse is marked in Arabic by a small circle°. The division of verses differs in different editions of the Arabic Qur'án. In the Rev. E. M. Wherry's edition of Sale's translation, the verses are numbered according to the edition of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qádir of Delhi, so as to correspond with those of the Roman Urdu edition, published at Ludhiana, in 1876. The Qur'án is also arranged into thirty sections, called juz, or súpára (Persian), to enable

<sup>1</sup> The numbers given vary to some extent.



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a Muslim to recite the whole in the thirty days of the Ramadán. A rukú' is section of about ten verses at the end of which the Muslim makes a bow of reverence. Muslims generally quote the Qur'án by the súpára and rukú', and not by the súra and ayat.

**Titles.**—Each chapter, except the ninth, begins with Bismilláh, 'In the name of God'; and is generally distinguished by some word of importance occurring in it. The titles of the first six are as follows: 1. The opening, 2. The Cow. 3. Family of 'Imrán. 4. Women. 5. Table. 6. Cattle. Twenty-nine súras begin with certain letters of the alphabet; as, A.L.M., A.L.R. These are supposed to express profound mysteries, known only to God. Nöldeke, an eminent Oriental scholar, supposes that they are the initials of the persons from whom the portions to which they are prefixed were obtained.

**Language.**—The Qur'án is written in a kind of jingling Arabic prose. Palmer says: 'The clauses are rhythmical though not symmetrically so, and for the most part end in the same rhyme throughout the chapter. As Arabic consists for the most part of trilateral roots, it lends itself very readily to this species of composition'.<sup>1</sup>

**Arrangement and general character.**—The súras are not placed in the order of time. The opening

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the Qur'án*, pp. liv-v. c

chapter stands first, and then the longest chapters. Some of the sūras contain verses delivered at different periods, and put together without regard to subject. Sir William Muir considers that the shorter chapters belong, as a rule, to Muḥammad's early ministry; so that to begin at the end of the Qur'ān and read backwards would give the best conception of the stages of his teaching. He specifies eighteen sūras, consisting of short rhapsodies, which may have been composed by Muḥammad before he conceived the idea of a divine mission, none of which are in the form of a message from the Deity. Sūratu'l-'Aṣr (ciii) 1-3. is an example:—

I swear by the declining day!

Verily, man's lot is cast amid destruction,

Save those who believe and do the things which be right,

And enjoin truth and enjoin steadfastness on each other.

According to tradition, the first five verses of Sūratu'l-'Alaq (xcv) 1-5 were the earliest revealed. They are as follows:—

Recite thou, in the name of the Lord who created:—

Created man from CLOTS OF BLOOD:—

Recite thou! For thy Lord is the most beneficent,

Who hath taught us the use of the pen:—

Hath taught man that which he knoweth not.

The following remarks are abridged from Palmer:—

'The sūras resolve themselves into two great classes, those revealed at Mecca and those revealed

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at Madína after the flight; and these are easily distinguished by their style and subject-matter.

'The earlier ones especially are grander in style, and testify in every verse to the mental exaltation of the prophet and the earnest belief which he certainly had at this time in the reality and truth of his divine mission. There are glowing pictures of the happiness in store for those who should believe, and frightful descriptions of the everlasting torments of unbelievers.

'In the sūras of the second Meccan period, we first find the long stories of the prophets of olden time, especial stress being laid upon the punishment which fell upon their contemporaries for disbelief; the moral is always the same, namely that Muḥammad came under precisely similar circumstances, and that a denial of the truth of his mission would bring on his fellow-citizens the self-same retribution.

'The three periods (first and second Meccan periods and the Madína period) again are marked by the oaths which occur throughout the Qur'án. In the first period they are very frequent and often long, the whole powers of nature being invoked to bear witness to the unity of God and the mission of His apostle; in the second period they are shorter, and of rarer occurrence; in the last period they are absent altogether.

'In the Madína sūras the prophet is no longer merely trying to convert his hearers by examples,

promises, and warnings; he addresses them as their prince and general, praising or blaming them for their conduct, and giving them laws and precepts as occasion required.’<sup>1</sup>

There are four proposed chronological arrangements of the chapters. That of Jalálu’d-ûin about A.D. 1523; those of Sir William Muir, Rodwell, and Noldeke. Sell’s *Historical Development of the Qur’ân* is a valuable criticism of the book, based on its chronological order.

The fact that some of the chapters contain verses of different periods increases the difficulty of arranging them. Although details differ, Sir William Muir’s suggestion is recommended: ‘Treat the Qur’ân as an Arabic book; *begin at the end and read backwards.*’

**Printing and translations.**—The Qur’ân was first printed in Arabic at Rome in 1530. The first European translation was into Latin about A.D. 1143; but it was not printed till 1543. The oldest French translation was done in 1647. From this the first English translation was made. The best known English translation, made by Sale, appeared in 1734. Sir W. Muir says of it:—

‘Though paraphrastic, perhaps to an excess, it deserves our admiration, not only for its faithfulness, but for the wonderful transfusion of the spirit of the original into a foreign tongue.’ He

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the Qur’ân*, pp. lx, lxiii.

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adds: 'Sale's paraphrase brings out the sense generally in accordance with the interpretation of commentators. The student will, however, find that the original is often capable of a different rendering.'<sup>1</sup>

Sale's translation has a long 'Preliminary Discourse', which Sir William Muir characterizes as 'invaluable'. It has also very copious explanatory notes.

In 1843, Lane, the distinguished Arabic scholar, published *Selections from the Qur'án*, of which a revised edition was edited by his grand-nephew, Stanley Lane-Poole, in 1879.<sup>2</sup>

There is an English translation by Rodwell (1861) in which the chronological arrangement of the sūras is attempted. This is an exceedingly good translation. The selections in this book are all taken from Rodwell's Qur'án.

The latest translation is by Palmer, in the *Sacred Books of the East* (1880).

Valuable helps to the English student are Rev. Dr. E. M. Wherry's *Commentary on the Qur'án*, 4 vols.<sup>3</sup> and Canon Sell's *Historical Development of the Qur'án*.<sup>4</sup>

The Muḥammadans themselves have made translations into Persian, Urdu, Pushtu and Turkish; but the Arabic text is always printed with them.

<sup>1</sup> *The Qur'án*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Trübner's Oriental Series.

<sup>3</sup> Trübner's Oriental Series, 1882. <sup>4</sup> S.P.C.K. and C.L.S.

•As already mentioned, an edition in Roman Urdu was printed at the Ludhiana Press in 1876. A new translation into Urdu, by the Rev. Dr. 'Imádu'd-dín, has been published at Lahore and may be had from the Punjáb Religious Book Society.

**Muhammadian account of the origin of the Qur'an.**—Although some of the hymns of the Vedas say that they are new and others refer to recent events, the uncritical Hindus claim that they are eternal. Muslim ideas of the Qur'án are equally extravagant. Wollaston says:—

'The Muslims absolutely deny that the Book was composed by their Prophet himself, or by any other for him; it being their general and orthodox belief that it is of divine origin, nay, that it is eternal and uncreated; that the first transcript has been from everlasting by God's throne, written on a table of vast size, in which are also recorded the divine decrees past and future. A copy from this table, in one volume, was by the ministry of the angel Gabriel sent down to the lowest heaven in the month of Ramadán, in the Night of Power! whence Gabriel revealed it to Muḥammad by parcels, some at Mecca, and some at Madína, at different times during twenty-three years, as the exigency of affairs required.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Half Hours with Muḥammad*, p. 153.

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'Āyesha, one of Muḥammad's wives, gives the following account of his first revelations by dreams :—

'The first revelations which the Prophet received were in true dreams; and he never dreamt but it came to pass as regularly as the dawn of day. After this the Prophet was fond of retirement, and used to seclude himself in a cave in mount *Hirā'* and worship there day and night. He would, whenever he wished, return to his family at Mecca, and then go back again, taking with him the necessities of life. Thus he continued to return to *Khadija* from time to time, until one day the revelation came down to him, and the angel came to him and said "Read", but the Prophet said "I am not a reader." And the Prophet related that he (i.e. the angel) took hold of me and squeezed me as much as I could bear, and he then let me go and said again "Read!" And I said, "I am not a reader." Then he took hold of me a second time, and squeezed me as much as I could bear, and then let me go, and said, "Read!" And I said, "I am not a reader." Then he took hold of me a third time, and squeezed me as much as I could bear, and said :—

Read! in the name of thy Lord who created;  
Created man from congealed blood;  
Read! for thy Lord is the most beneficent,  
He hath taught man the use of the pen;  
He hath taught man that which he knoweth not.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sūratu'l-'Alaq* (xcvi) 1-5. This translation is Sale's, which Matthews used in his translation of the passage from the *Mishkāt*.

‘Then the Prophet repeated the words himself, and with his heart trembling he returned to Khadija, and said, “Wrap me up, wrap me up.” And they wrapped him up in a garment till his fear was dispelled, and he told Khadija what had passed, and he said, “Verily I was afraid I should have died.” Then Khadija said, “No, it will not be so. I swear by God, He will never make you melancholy or sad. For verily you are kind to your relations, you speak the truth, you are faithful in trust, you bear the afflictions of the people, you spend in good works what you gain in trade, you are hospitable, and you assist your fellowmen.” After this Khadija took the Prophet to Waraqa, who was the son of her uncle, and she said to him, “O son of my uncle! hear what your brother’s son says.” Then Waraqa said to the Prophet, “O son of my brother! what did you see?” Then the Prophet told Waraqa what he saw, and Waraqa said, “That is the *namús* which God sent to Moses.” ‘Áysha also relates that Háarith ibn, Hishám asked the Prophet, “How did the revelation come to you?” And the Prophet said, “Sometimes like the noise of a bell, and sometimes the angel would come and converse with me in the shape of a man.”’<sup>1</sup>

•

<sup>1</sup> From the *Mishkát*, translated by Matthews, and quoted by Hughes, *Notes on Muhammadanism*, pp. 16-19.



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Wollaston says: 'The number of visits which the angelic messenger paid to earth for the purpose of revealing to the Prophet the wishes of his Creator is said to have been no less than 24,000.'<sup>1</sup> The same writer gives the following account of what afterwards took place:—

'It is supposed that few chapters were delivered entire, the most part having been 'revealed piecemeal and written down from time to time by the Prophet's amanuensis, till they were completed, according to the direction of the angel.

'After the passages had been taken down in writing by his scribe, from the prophet's mouth, they were published to his followers, several of whom took copies for their private use, but the far greater number learned them by heart. The originals, when returned, were put promiscuously into a chest, no order of time being observed, for which reason it is uncertain when many passages were revealed.'<sup>2</sup>

In the battle of Yemama, after Muḥammad's death, many of the reciters of the Qur'án were slain. The Khalifa 'Umar, therefore, suggested to Abú Bakr that all the chapters of the Qur'án should be collected. The task was committed to Zaid, the chief amanuensis of Muḥammad. He sought out the fragments of the Qur'án from every quarter, and gathered them together from

<sup>1</sup> *Half Hours with Muḥammad*, p. 153.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 153–4.

palm-leaves and tablets of white stone, and from the breasts of men. The manuscript was intrusted to the care of Hafaṣa, one of Muḥammad's widows.

Ten years later the Khalifa 'Uthmān appointed Zaid to make a fresh revision of the work, and all previous copies were called in and burnt. This subject is exhaustively treated in Sell's *Rescensions of the Qur'ān*.<sup>1</sup>

Sell says: 'Belief in the eternity of the Qur'ān was not at first a hard and fast dogma of Islām. It was more a speculative opinion than anything else, but the opposition of the Mu'tazilas soon led all who wished to be considered orthodox to become not only stout assertors of the eternity of the Qur'ān, but to give up their lives in defence of what they believed to be true.'<sup>2</sup>

Muslims thus dispose of the references to current events. . Sale says:—

'If any objection be hence made to that eternity of the Qur'ān, which the Muḥammadans are taught to believe, they easily answer it by their doctrine of absolute predestination, according to which all the accidents for the sake of which these occasional passages revealed were predetermined by God from all eternity.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C.L.S., price 8 annas.

<sup>2</sup> *The Faith of Islām*, (3rd ed.) p. 213. (S.P.C.K.)

<sup>3</sup> *Introduction*, p. 107.

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Sale thus describes the honour paid to the book itself:—

‘This book is in the greatest reverence and esteem among the Muḥammadans. They dare not so much as touch it without being first washed or legally purified; which, lest they should do so by inadvertence, they write these words on the cover or label, ‘Let none touch it but they who are clean.’ They read it with great care and respect, never holding it below their girdles. They swear by it, they consult it in their weighty occasions,<sup>1</sup> carry it with them to war, write sentences of it on their banners, adorn it with gold and precious stones.’<sup>2</sup>

A man who can repeat the Qur’án by heart is called a Ḥáfiz. He does not require to understand the meaning, but to be able to pronounce the words correctly. Some blind men make a living by doing so.

**Sources of the Qur’án.**—‘The sources whence Muḥammad derived the materials for his Qur’án, are, over and above the more poetical parts, which are his own creation, the legends of his time and country, Jewish traditions based upon the Talmud, perverted to suit his own purposes, and the floating Christian traditions of Arabia and South Syria. Muḥammadanism, however,

<sup>1</sup> By dipping into it, and taking an omen from the words which they first light on.

<sup>2</sup> *Introduction*, p. 114.

owes more to Judaism than it does either to Christianity or Šabianism, for it is simply Talmudic Judaism adapted to Arabia, plus the apostleship of Jesus and Muḥammad. Wherever Muḥammad departs from the monotheistic principles of Judaism, as in the idolatrous practices of the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba, it is evident that it is done as a necessary concession to the national feelings and sympathies of the people of Arabiā, and it is absolutely impossible for Muḥammadan divines to reconcile the idolatrous rites of the Ka'ba with that simple monotheism which it was evidently Muḥammad's intention to establish in Arabia.<sup>1</sup>

A good deal has been borrowed from Zoroastrian sources and from the Apocryphal Gospels. Useful information on this point will be found in *al-Qur'án* The Islām Series<sup>2</sup>, and in Tisdall's *Sources of the Qur'án*.<sup>3</sup>

**Tradition.**—Next to the Qur'án, Islām is based on tradition. While the former is regarded as supreme, its whole system of government is largely founded on the latter.

A command given by Muḥammad or an example set by him is called *sunnat*, a rule. It is the belief of Musalmáns that their Prophet in all that he did and all that he said was guided by

<sup>1</sup> Hughes, *Notes on Muḥammadanism*, pp. 27-8.

<sup>2</sup> C.I.S.

<sup>3</sup> See also *Faith of Islām*, p. 57.

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God, and that his words and acts are for ever a divine rule of faith and practice. The sayings of Muḥammad are termed Ḥadīth, or Tradition. A Muslim places the sunnat on the same level as the Bible, but he regards the Qur'án as far superior—the very words of God. .

The Sunnis, who include the great majority of Muslims, accept what are called Ṣiḥāḥ's-Sitta, or 'six correct books', gathered together by the men whose names they bear. Not one of them flourished until the third century after Muḥammad, so that it may be questioned how far his sayings were handed down correctly. The Shí'ahs do not acknowledge the six books of the Sunnis, but have other five books of Traditions compiled at a later period.

Muslims are also guided by what is called Ijmá', the consent of the leading companions of Muḥammad and their followers. The highest rank a Muslim divine could reach was that of a Mujtahid, 'one who strives'. Such could make what is called an ijtihád, a deduction on a legal or theological question. The ijtiháds of the four successors of Muḥammad are considered the most authoritative of the class.

There are four systems of Muḥammadan law, recognized by all except the Shí'ahs, founded by the four Imáms. 'In these days the Qáḍi must make no order, the Mufti give no fatwá, or legal decision, contrary to the opinion of the four

Infāms.' 'To follow any other course is not lawful.' Change and progress are therefore impossible.

Qiyās, 'comparing', is the fourth foundation of Islām. It denotes the reasoning of the learned with regard to the teaching of the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, and Ijmā'.

The Qur'ān is considered so sacred that only the companions of the Prophet, who were in constant intercourse with him, are deemed worthy of being commentators or explainers of it. The work of learned divines since then has been to learn the Qur'ān by heart and to master the traditions, with the writings of the earliest commentators thereon. A Muḥammadan student passes through a course of instruction in grammar, rhetoric, logic, law, and dogmatics, before he enters on the study of 'Ilm-i-Uṣūl, the 'science of the roots', namely the Qur'ān, Tradition, Ijmā' and Qiyās. A good memory, not judgement, is the great desideratum in a Muslim theologian.<sup>1</sup>

The questions of the inspiration of the Qur'ān, and of its eternal nature and the many controversies in Islām itself which have gathered round the book are of the deepest interest. They would, however, require fuller treatment than can be given to them in an introduction. Full details

<sup>1</sup> See *Sell's Faith of Islām*, pp. 18-55, for a full account of the Sunnat, Ijmā' and Qiyās.

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will be found in the *Faith of Islám*<sup>1</sup> and a somewhat briefer treatment in *al-Qur'án* and *Inspiration*.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE.—*It has been considered desirable to introduce certain of Rossell's notes; in each instance, however, the initials of the author (J. M. R.) have been inserted in brackets after the note.*

<sup>1</sup> S.P.C.K.

<sup>2</sup> C.L.S.

## I. SÚRATU'L-FÁTIHA (THE OPENING)

*Revealed at Mecca*

THIS is given below both in Arabic and English. The Arabic heading to the right means, 'Súratu'l-Fátiha (revealed in) Mecca'. The heading to the left is: 'And in seven verses'.

وَهِيَ سَبْعُ آيَاتٍ	بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ	سورة الفاتحة مكية
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ	مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ	إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ
وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ	اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ	صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ	وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ	

Rodwell's translation of the Fátíha is as follows:—

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.  
Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds!  
The Compassionate, the Merciful!  
King on the Day of reckoning!  
Thee do we worship, and to Thee do we cry for help!  
Guide Thou us on the straight path!  
The path of those to whom Thou hast been gracious.  
With whom Thou art not angry and who go not astray.



## 2 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

This chapter is held in the highest esteem by all Muslims. They regard it as the essence of the whole Qur'án, and often repeat it as Christians do the Lord's Prayer. All must admire its spirit; it is throughout earnest and devout.

### II. SÚRATU'L-BAQARA (THE COW)

*Revealed at Mecca and Madína.*

THIS is the longest chapter in the Qur'án. It is called 'The Cow' from its containing an account of the sacrifice of a cow by Moses. Part of it relates to the Jews, and there is much of a legislative character in it.

The excellency of the Qur'án.

ELIF. LAM. MIM.<sup>1</sup> No doubt is there about this Book: It is a guidance to the God-fearing,

Who believe in the unseen,<sup>2</sup> who observe prayer, and out of what we have bestowed on them, expend for God;

And who believe in what hath been sent down to thee, and in what hath been sent down before thee, and full faith have they in the life to come. 1-3.

There are twenty-nine chapters of the Qur'án which began with certain letters, and Muslims say that God alone knows what they mean. A

<sup>1</sup> Said to mean '*Amara li Muhammad*', i.e. at the command of Muhammad; but see Sura lxviii., p. 32 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Death, Resurrection, Judgement, etc. (J. M. R.).

European explanation is that they denote the names of the persons from whom the chapters were obtained. This chapter begins with, 'No doubt is there about this book'. Muhammad's constant assertions on this point show that there was room for doubt.

Challenge to produce a chapter like the Qur'an.

And if ye be in doubt as to that which we have sent down to our servant, then produce a Sura like it, and summon your witnesses, beside God, if ye are men of truth:

But if ye do it not, and never shall ye do it, then fear the fire prepared for the infidels, whose fuel is men and stones.<sup>1</sup> 21-2.

Promise of a prophet given to Adam.

And words of *prayer* learned Adam from his Lord: and God turned to him; for He loveth to turn, the Merciful.

We said, 'Get ye down from it, all together: and if Guidance shall come to you from me, whoso shall follow my guidance, on them shall come no fear, neither shall they be grieved:

But they who shall not believe, and treat our signs as falsehoods, these shall be inmates of the fire; in it shall they remain for ever.' 35-7.

Prayer and almsgiving.

And observe prayer and pay the legal impost, and bow down with those who bow. 40.

<sup>1</sup> The statues of false gods (J. M. R.).

## 4 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

No atonement; no Saviour.

And fear ye the day when soul shall not satisfy for soul at all, nor shall any intercession be accepted from them, nor shall any ransom be taken, neither shall they be helped. 45.

The law given to Moses as a guide.

And when we gave Moses the Book and the Illumination in order to your guidance. 50.

The sacrifice of a cow by Moses.

And when Moses said to his people, ' Verily, God bids you sacrifice a COW;'<sup>1</sup> they said, ' Makest thou a jest of us ? ' He said, ' God keep me from being one of the foolish.' They said, ' Call on thy Lord for us that He would make plain to us what she is.' He said, ' God saith, " She is a cow neither old nor young, *but* of the middle age—between *the two* : " do therefore what ye are bidden.'

They said, ' Call on your Lord for us, that he would make plain to us what is her colour.' He said, ' God saith, " She is a fawn-coloured cow; her colour is very bright; she rejoiceth the beholders." '

They said, ' Call on thy Lord for us that He would make plain to us what cow it is—for to us are cows alike,—and verily, if God please, we shall be guided rightly: '

He said, ' God saith, " She is a cow not worn by ploughing the earth or watering the field, sound, no blemish in her." ' They said, ' Now hast thou brought the truth: ' . Then they sacrificed her; Yet nearly had they done it not:

And when ye slew a man, and strove among yourselves about him, God brought to light what he had hidden:

<sup>1</sup> This is fully explained later.

For we said, 'Strike *the corpse* with part of her.' So God giveth life to the dead, and sheweth you his signs, that haply ye may understand. 63-8.

The Muslim sacrifice of a cow, to which Hindus so much object, is based on the following legend. A Jew was killed by a relation of his, who hid the body at some distance. The friends of the slain man brought a charge against certain persons, but there was no proof. God then told Moses to offer a cow with certain marks. The body of the murdered man, when struck with a part of the dead cow, revived, and standing up named the murderer, and then fell down dead again. The story seems borrowed from the heifer ordered to be slain for the expiation of an unknown murder. See Deut. xxi. 1-9, for the true account.

Charge of corrupting the Scriptures.

But there are illiterates among them who are unacquainted with the Book,<sup>1</sup> but with lies only, and have but vague fancies. Woe to those who with their own hands transcribe the Book corruptly, and then say, 'This is from God,' that they may sell it for some mean price! Woe then to them for that which their hands have written! and, Woe to them for the gains which they have made! 73.

This is a charge frequently brought against the Christian Scriptures, but if a few persons

<sup>1</sup> The Pentateuch. This passage shows that the art of writing was known in Medina shortly after the Hejira (J. M. R.).

## 6 · SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

did this, it implied the existence of genuine copies. It will be noticed at length in the Review.

Who will be saved?

But they who have believed and done the things that be right, they shall be the inmates of Paradise—therein to abide for ever. 76.

The divine mission of Moses and Jesus is acknowledged.

Moreover, to Moses gave we 'the Book,' and we raised up apostles after him; and to Jesus, son of Mary, gave we clear proofs of *his mission* and strengthened him by the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> 81.

The Qur'án claimed to be from God, and the unbelief of the Jews.

And when a Book had come to them from God, confirming that which they had received already, although they had before prayed for victory over those who believed not—yet when that Koran came to them, of which they had knowledge, they did not recognise it. 93.

The Qur'án revealed through Gabriel.

Whoso is an enemy to God or his angels, or to Gabriel, or to Michael, *shall have God as his enemy*: for verily God is an enemy to the Infidels. 92.

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel. Muhammad either knowingly rejected the divinity of the Holy Ghost, or confounded Gabriel announcing the conception with the Holy Spirit that overshadowed Mary. It is probable that Muhammad's ideas of the Spirit were at first indefinite, but that the two expressions, Gabriel and the Holy Spirit, became ultimately synonymous. See note on Sura [lxvii.] xvii. 87. Geiger (p. 82) quotes an instance in which the Jewish expositors understand the *distinctly-speaking Spirit* (Sanhedr. 44) of Gabriel (J. M. R.).

The devils taught men sorcery.

And they followed what the Satans read<sup>1</sup> in the reign of Solomon: not that Solomon was unbelieving, but the Satans were unbelieving. Sorcery did they teach to men, and what had been revealed to the two angels, Harut and Marut, at Babel. 96.

The Muslim belief is that Hárút and Márút, two angels, having fallen in love with the daughters of men, were condemned to hang in chains in a pit at Babylon, where they teach men magic.

The doctrine of abrogation.

Whatever verses we cancel, or cause thee to forget, we bring a better or its like. Knowest thou not that God hath power over all things? 100.

The Jews pointed out that some of Muhammad's sayings were contradictory to former ones. Hence this doctrine. As God is almighty, He can change or abolish His laws at His own discretion. Muslims claim that the Christian

<sup>1</sup> In Solomon's Books of Magic. This story has been supposed to be of Persian origin. See Hyde de Rel. Vet. Pers. ch. xii. But from a passage in the Midr. Abkhir quoted in the Midr. Jalkut, ch. 44, and from a quotation in Maracci's Prodr. iv. 82, Geiger infers that Muhammad has transferred to the time of Solomon, the Rabbinic traditions concerning the influence of angels upon men at the time of the Deluge, p. 106. 'Babel is regarded by the Muslims as the fountain head of the science of magic. They suppose Haroot and Maroot to be two angels who, in consequence of their want of compassion for the frailties of mankind, were sent down to earth to be tempted. They both sinned; and being permitted to choose whether they would be punished now or hereafter, chose the former, and are still suspended by the feet at Babel in a rocky pit, and are the great teachers of magic' (Lane on ch. iii. note 14 of the 1001 Nights.) (J. M. R.).

## 8 · SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Scriptures have thus been abrogated. It is true that rites and ceremonies may be changed, but not the great doctrines which are taught consistently throughout the whole book. God, though Almighty, cannot contradict Himself.

The Old and New Testaments read by Jews and Christians.

Moreover, the Jews say, 'The Christians lean on nought:'

'On nought lean the Jews,' say the Christians: Yet both are readers of the Book. 107.

No Qibla necessary.

The East and the West is God's: therefore, whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God:<sup>1</sup> Truly God is immense and knoweth all. 109.

No intercession at the day of Judgement.

And dread the day when not in aught shall soul satisfy for soul, nor shall any ransom be taken from it, nor shall any intercession avail, and they shall not be helped. 117.

Many Muslims believe that Muḥammad will act as an intercessor, but this is here denied.

The Ka'ba said to have been built by Abraham and Ismael.

And remember when we appointed the Holy House as man's resort and safe retreat, and said, 'Take ye the station of Abraham for a place of prayer:' And we

<sup>1</sup> Abrogated by verse 144.

commanded Abraham and Ismael, 'Purify my house for those who shall go in procession round it, and those who shall abide there for devotion, and those who shall bow down and prostrate themselves.'

And when Abraham, with Ismael, raised the foundations of the House, *they said*, 'O our Lord! accept it from us; for thou art the Hearer, the Knower.' 119, 121.

The Ka'ba was called by way of eminence the *House*. It is claimed that it was built by Abraham and his son Ismael. In the Ka'ba enclosure there is a so-called footprint of Abraham on a stone.

No distinction between the Qur'an, and the Old and New Testaments.

Say ye: 'We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us, and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes: and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus, and that which was given to the prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between any of them: and to God are we resigned (Muslims).' 130.

Muhammad here says that the Christian Scriptures are to be honoured equally with the Qur'an. 'No difference do we between any of them.'

The Arabs appointed a middle nation.

Thus have we made you a central people,<sup>1</sup> that ye may be witnesses in regard to mankind, and that the apostle may be a witness in regard to you. 137.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *intermediate*, i.e., according to the commentators, not addicted to excess, just (J. M. R.).



## 10 · SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

To flatter the national pride of his countrymen and to make them zealous for the spread of Islám, they were declared to be the chosen people of God, while the Jews were rejected.

The abrogation of verse 109.

And from whatever place thou comest forth, turn thy face toward the sacred Mosque; for this is the truth from thy Lord; and God is not inattentive to your doings. 144.

At first Muḥammad did not adopt any point of adoration. After the flight from Mecca to Madína, to conciliate the Jews, he bade his followers turn their faces to Jerusalem. As he failed to gain them over, in the second year of the flight, to please the Arabs, he recognized the Ka'ba as the holy place towards which prayer should be offered. Many of his followers were offended, and left him for changing the Qibla from Jerusalem to an idolatrous city. Such are denounced as 'fools'.

Those who die fighting for Islám go to paradise.

And say not of those who are slain on God's path that they are Dead; nay, they are Living! But ye understand not. 149.

This was a great encouragement to the Arabs to fight to the death. It is explained more fully in another part of the Qur'án.

Going round Safá and Marwa. •

Verily, Safa and Marwah are among the monuments of God: whoever then maketh a pilgrimage to the

temple, or visiteth it, shall not be to blame if he go round about them both. And as for him who of his own accord doeth what is good--God is Grateful, Knowing. 53.

Şafá and Marwa were two mountains near Mecca, where there were anciently two idols worshipped by the Arabs. This passage was intended to take away the scruples of going round these mountains, as the idolaters did. The true reason for allowing this ancient superstition seems to have been the difficulty of preventing it. The custom of running between these two hills is still observed.

What is true religion?

There is no piety in turning your faces toward the east or the west, but he is pious who believeth in God, and the last day, and the angels, and the Scriptures, and the prophets; who for the love of God disburseth his wealth to his kindred, and to the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask, and for ransoming; who observeth prayer, and payeth the legal alms, and who is of those who are faithful to their engagements when they have engaged in them, and patient under ills and hardships, and in time of trouble: these are they who are just, and these are they who fear the Lord.

This passage justly teaches that merely turning the face towards the east or west is of no avail. True religion consists in faith in God and benevolence towards men.

## 12 ' SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

### The Ramaḍán fast ordained.

As to the month Ramadhan in which the Koran was sent down to be man's guidance, and an explanation of that guidance, and of that illumination, as soon as any one of you observeth the moon, let him set about the fast; but he who is sick, or upon a journey, shall fast a like number of other *Ḍays*. God wisheth you ease, but wisheth not your discomfort, and that you fulfil the number of *days*, and that you glorify God for his guidance, and that you be thankful. 181.

Soon after his arrival at Madína, Muḥammad observed the Jewish fast; but at a later period he proclaimed the Ramaḍán, the ninth month of the Muslim year, to be henceforth observed as an annual fast. In the latter part of the month occurs the Night of Power, in which the Qur'án was said to have been brought down to the lowest heaven.

When the fast should begin and end.

Eat and drink until ye can discern a white thread from a black thread by the daybreak: then fast strictly till night. 183.

Muḥammad did not know that in some parts of the world the sun does not set for some weeks, but seems to circle round the heavens. There the observance of this rule would be impossible.

War for Islám.

And fight for the cause of God against those who fight against you: but commit not the injustice of attacking them first: God loveth not such injustice:

And kill them wherever ye shall find them, and eject them from whatever place they have ejected you; for civil discord<sup>1</sup> is worse than carnage: yet attack them not at the sacred Mosque, unless they attack you therein; but if they attack you, slay them. Such the reward of the infidels. 187.

This is perhaps the first express command of Muḥammad to establish his religion by the sword. At Mecca he appeared as a simple preacher, and he was such at Madīna for a time; but when he became strong enough, he adopted a different course. Hence the Qur'ān is contradictory on the subject.

Duty to contribute for the spread of Islām.

Give freely for the cause of God, and throw not yourselves with your own hands into ruin;<sup>2</sup> and do good, for God loveth those who do good. 192.

The giving of alms here refers to gifts to carry on the holy war against infidels.

Directions about pilgrimage.

Accomplish the Pilgrimage and the Visitation of the holy places *in honour of God*: and if ye be hemmed in *by foes*, send whatever offering shall be the easiest: and shave not your heads until the offering reach the place of sacrifice. But whoever among you is sick, or hath an ailment of the head, must satisfy by fasting, or alms, or an offering. And when ye are safe *from foes*,

<sup>1</sup> Their driving you out of Mecca; or, *the temptation (to idolatry)* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> This shows that Muhammad inculcated the doctrine of entire freedom of the will (J. M. R.).

## 14 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

he who contents himself with the Visitation of the holy places, until the Pilgrimage, *shall bring* whatever offering shall be the easiest. But he who findeth nothing *to offer*, shall fast three days in the Pilgrimage itself, and seven days when ye return: they shall be ten days in all. This is binding on him whose family shall not be present at the sacred Mosque. And fear God, and know that God is terrible in punishing.

*Let the Pilgrimage be made* in the months already known:<sup>1</sup> whoever therefore undertaketh the Pilgrimage therein, let him not know a woman, nor transgress, nor wrangle in the Pilgrimage. The good which ye do, God knoweth it. And provide *for your journey*; but the best provision is the fear of God: fear me, then, O men of understanding! 192-3.

Mecca was dependent for its importance upon the great annual pilgrimage. As numbers flocked to it, a profitable trade could be carried on.

'Arafát is a mountain about eleven miles from Mecca. After many years' wandering, it is said that Adam here met and knew Eve. At 'Arafát the pilgrim should stand on the mountain and listen to a sermon. In the evening he goes to a place about half way between 'Arafát and Miná, where he should pick up seven pebbles. On the morning of the tenth day he goes to Miná, where there are three pillars, known as the Great Devil, the Middle Pillar, and the First One. Holding a pebble between the thumb and fore-finger of the right hand, the pilgrim throws

<sup>1</sup> Namely, Shawál, Dhu'lkaada, and Dhu'lhajja (J. M. R.).

it, saying: 'In the name of Alláh, and Alláh is Almighty, (I do this) in hatred of the fiend and to his shame.' The remaining six stones are thrown in like manner. The object is to confound the devils who are supposed to be there. The legend is that Gabriel taught Abraham to drive away the devil, who appeared to him, by throwing small stones at him.

The use of wine and lots are forbidden.

They will ask thee concerning wine and games of chance. SAY: In both is great sir, and advantage also, to men; but their sin is greater than their advantage. 216.

Under wine all sorts of strong drinks are held to be included. The word 'lots' properly signifies a game played with arrows, and much in use with pagan Arabs. The command is understood to forbid all games of chance; as dice and cards.

Laws about divorce.

Ye may divorce your wives twice: keep them honourably, or put them away with kindness. But it is not allowed you to appropriate to yourselves aught of what ye have given to them, unless both fear that they cannot keep within the bounds<sup>1</sup> set up by God. And if ye fear that they cannot observe the ordinances of God, no blame shall attach to either of you for what the wife shall herself give for her redemption. These are the bounds of God: therefore overstep them not; for

<sup>1</sup> *Limits, fences.* The word is Talmudic. Thus Pirke Aboth, i. 'The men of the great synagogue said . . . Make a fence for the law;' and iii. 13, 'Tradition is a fence to the law' (J. M. R.).

## 16 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

whoever oversteppeth the bounds of God, they are evil doers.

But if the husband divorce her *a third time*, it is not lawful for him to take her again, until she shall have married another husband; and if he also divorce her, then shall no blame attach to them if they return to each other, thinking, that they can keep within the bounds fixed by God. And these are the bounds of God; He maketh them clear to those who have knowledge.

But when ye divorce women, and the time for sending them away is come, either retain them with generosity, or put them away with generosity: but retain them not by constraint so as to be unjust towards them. He who doth so, doth in fact injure himself. 229-31.

A Muslim may have four wives at a time, and he may exchange or divorce them at pleasure. 'A Muslim wife,' says Sir William Muir, 'is liable to be cast adrift without the assignment of a single reason or the notice of a single hour. While the husband possesses the power of divorce, absolute, immediate, unquestioned; no privilege of a corresponding nature has been reserved for the wife.'

Duty to fight for religion.

Fight for the cause of God. 244.

Testimony to Jesus.

Some of the apostles we have endowed more highly than others: Those to whom God hath spoken, He hath raised to the loftiest grade, and to Jesus the Son of Mary we gave manifest signs, and we strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. 254.

## The throne verse.

God! There is no God but He; the Living, the Eternal; Nor slumber seizeth Him, nor sleep; His, whatsoever is in the Heavens and whatsoever is in the Earth! Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His own permission? He knoweth what *hath been* before them and what *shall be* after them; yet nought of His knowledge shall they grasp, save what He willeth. His Throne reacheth over the Heavens and the Earth, and the upholding of both burdeneth Him not; and He is the High, the Great! 256.

This verse is greatly admired by Muslims, some of whom wear it about them, engraved on a precious stone. If a person repeats it at night it is supposed that he will be kept in perfect safety.

## Violence in religion prohibited.

Let there be no compulsion in Religion.<sup>1</sup> 257.

## Almsgiving.

O ye who believe! bestow alms of the good things which ye have acquired, and of that which we have brought forth for you out of the earth, and choose not the bad for almsgiving.

They who give away their substance in alms, by night and day, in private and in public, shall have their reward with their Lord; no fear shall come on them, neither shall they be put to grief.

But they who believe and do the things that are right, and observe the prayers, and pay the legal impost, they

<sup>1</sup> For a critical study of this verse, showing its limited nature, see Sell's *Historical Development of the Qur'an*, pp. 229-30.



## 18 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

shall have their reward with their Lord: no fear shall come on them, neither shall they be put to grief. 269, 275, 277.

Islám attaches great importance to almsgiving. The saying is attributed to Khalifa 'Umar that 'prayer carries us half-way to God; fasting brings us to the door; and alms procures us admission.'

It is allowed that it is well for alms to be given publicly, although better if they are concealed. It may be said that by public giving others may be induced to give, but it is apt to induce pride. Indiscriminate Muslim charity, like that of the Hindus, produces very injurious effects. Lazy, able-bodied men are encouraged to live by begging.

Muslims are led also to believe that 'alms will atone for their sins'. Salvation is not to be so easily purchased.

### III. SÚRATU ÁLI 'IMRÁN (THE FAMILY OF 'IMRÁN)

#### *Madína*

THIS chapter contains a variety of passages belonging to different periods. It may be divided into two portions. Verses 1-122 contain instructions and warnings suited to the Muslims between the victory of Badr and the defeat at Uhud. The remainder seeks to counteract the evils following the latter event.

### III. THE FAMILY OF 'IMRÁN · 19

· The family of 'Imrán includes all the prophets descended from Amram; as Moses, Aaron, Zacharias, John, and Jesus.

God is one.

ELIF. LAM. MIM. God! there is no God but He, the Living, the Merciful! 1.

These words express half the Muslim's creed.  
Punishment for rejecting the Scriptures.

In truth hath He sent down to thee 'the Book' which confirmeth<sup>1</sup> those which precede it: For He had sent down the Law, and the Evangel aforetime, as man's Guidance; and now hath He sent down the 'Illumination'. (Furkan.)

Verily for those who believe not in the signs of God is a severe chastisement! And God is Mighty, the Avenger! 2-3.

Plain and obscure verses of the Qur'án.

He it is who hath sent down to thee 'the Book.' Some of its signs are of themselves perspicuous;—these are the basis of the Book—and others are figurative. But they whose hearts are given to err, follow its figures, craving discord, craving an interpretation; yet none knoweth its interpretation but God. And the stable in knowledge say, 'We believe in it: it is all from our Lord.' But none will bear this in mind, save men endued with understanding. 5.

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The meaning of some verses is evident; others are said to be hidden, ambiguous, compendious,

<sup>1</sup> Note the fact that the Qur'án confirms preceding Scriptures.

## 20 ·SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

or intricate. The terms are Muḥkam and Muta-shábih.<sup>1</sup>

The victory at Badr.

Ye have already had a sign in the meeting of the two hosts. The one host fought in the cause of God, and the other was infidel. To their own eyesight, the infidels saw you twice as many as themselves: And God aided with his succour whom He would: And in this truly was a lesson for men endued with discernment. 11.

The 'sign' was the defeat of 1,000 Meccans by Muḥammad, with 319 men, in the valley of Badr. The battle of Badr is memorable as the occasion on which Muḥammad first drew the sword in assertion of his claim as the commissioned apostle of the Most High God. The victory was alleged to be a sign of its truth; and Muḥammad was received in triumph on his return to Madína.<sup>2</sup>

Islám the true religion.

The true religion with God is Islám. 17.

The proper name of the Muḥammadan religion is Islám, which means the devoting one's self entirely to the commands of God.

<sup>1</sup> This verse is of great importance. A 'different reading' led to a great theological dispute between the Mu'tazilas and the orthodox Muslims on the nature of the Qur'án. See *Faith of Islám* (3rd ed.) pp. 190-1.

<sup>2</sup> A full account of this battle is given in *The Battles of Badr and of Uhud* (The Islám Series, C.L.S.).

Love to God.

SAY, If ye love God, then follow me: *then* God will love you, and forgive your sins; for God is Forgiving, Merciful. 29.

This is one of the few passages in the Qur'án in which love to God is mentioned. Fear is the chief feeling expressed.

The birth of Mary.

Remember when the wife of Imran said, 'O my Lord! I vow to thee what is in my womb, for thy special service. Accept it from me, for thou Hearest, Knowest!' And when she had given birth to it, she said, 'O my Lord! Verily I have brought forth a female'—God knew what she had brought forth; a male is not as a female<sup>1</sup>—and I have named her Mary, and I take refuge with thee for her and for her offspring, from Satan the stoned.'

So with goodly acceptance did her Lord accept her, and with goodly growth did he make her grow.<sup>2</sup> Zacharias reared her. So oft as Zacharias went in to Mary at the sanctuary, he found her supplied with food. 'Oh, Mary!' said he, 'whence hast thou this?' She said, 'It is from God; for God supplieth whom He will, without reckoning!' 31-2.

'Imrán is supposed to have been the father of Mary. Muḥammad does not seem to have clearly

<sup>1</sup> That is, the female could not become a priest (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> According to a tradition of Muhammad every new-born child is touched by Satan, with the exception of Mary and her Son, between whom and Satan God interposed a veil. (Ijélal. Beidh.) Hence this passage *may* imply the Immaculate Conception of the B. V. Mary (J. M. R.).

## 22 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'AN

distinguished between Miriam, the sister of Moses, and the Virgin Mary. Abraham is said to have driven away Satan by pelting him with stones when he tempted him to refuse to sacrifice Isaac. It is said that Zacharias found provisions with Mary. Muslim writers say that none went into Mary's apartments, but Zacharias himself; and that he locked the doors upon her; yet he found she had always winter fruits in summer, and summer fruits in winter.

### The birth of Christ.

*Remember* when the angel said, 'O Mary! Verily God announceth to thee the Word from Him: His name shall be. Messiah Jesus the son of Mary, illustrious in this world, and in the next. and one of those who have near access to God;

'And He shall speak to men alike when in the cradle and when grown up; And he shall be one of the just.'

She said, 'How, O my Lord! shall I have a son, when man hath not touched me?' He said, 'Thus: God will create what He will; When He decreeth a thing, He only saith, "Be", and it is.'

And he will teach him the Book, and the Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel; and he shall be an apostle to the children of Israel. 'Now have I come,' *he will say*, 'to you with a sign from your Lord: Out of clay will I make for you, as it were, the figure of a bird: and I will breathe into it, and it shall become, by God's leave, a bird. And I will heal the blind, and the leper; and by God's leave will I quicken the dead; and I will tell you what ye eat, and what ye store up in your houses! Truly in this will be a sign for you, if ye are believers.' 40-3.

### III. THE FAMILY OF 'IMRÁN · 23

There are references here to two fabulous traditions of the eastern Christians which Muḥammad accepted as true. It is said that while yet in the cradle, Jesus said to his mother, 'Verily I am Jesus the Son of God.' The other legend is that Jesus made a bird of clay which became a bird.<sup>1</sup>

Salvation only by Islām.

Who so desireth any other religion than Islām, that religion shall never be accepted from him, and in the next world he shall be among the lost. 79.

The Ka'ba founded, and the duty of pilgrimage.

The first temple that was founded for mankind, was that in Becca,<sup>2</sup>—Blessed, and a guidance to human beings.

In it are evident signs, even the standing-place<sup>3</sup> of Abraham: and he who entereth it is safe. And the pilgrimage to the temple, is a service due to God from those who are able to journey thither.

And as to him who believeth not—verily God can afford to dispense with all creatures! 90-2.

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the accounts derived from the Apocryphal Gospels, see *al-Qur'ān* (The Islām Series C.J.S. 4 annas).

<sup>2</sup> Becca, *place of crowding*, i.e. Mecca. This sentence, together with other Suras—the Cave, Mary, Imran, Repentance, T, II, are woven into the Kiswah or covering of the Caaba, which is renewed annually (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> The Makam Ibrahim (praying place of Abraham) is a small building supported by six pillars about eight ft. high, four of which are surrounded from top to bottom by a fine iron railing, while they leave the space between the two hind pillars open; within the railing is a frame about 5 ft. square, said to contain the sacred stone on which Ibrahim stood when he built the Caaba.—Burckhardt (J. M. R.).

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Becca is the same as Mecca. The first house was the Ka'ba, claimed to have been erected by Abraham and Ishmael. Persons who are able should go on pilgrimage to the Ka'ba. Those who have money enough, but cannot go themselves, should hire others to go in their room.

The lot of infidels and believers contrasted.

On THE DAY when faces shall turn white, and faces shall turn black! And as to those whose faces shall have turned black ' . . . What! after your belief have ye become infidels? Taste then the chastisement, for that ye have been unbelievers.'

And as to those whose faces shall have become white, they shall be within the mercy of God: therein shall they abide for ever. 102-3.

The faces of infidels are said to be blackened; those of believers to be whitened.

Muslims not to make friends of unbelievers.

O ye who have believed! form not intimacies among others than yourselves. They will not fail to corrupt you. They long for your ruin. 114.

Encouragement after the battle of Uhud.

And *remember* when thou didst leave thy household at early morn, that thou mightest prepare the faithful camp for the war;—God heard, knew it—

When two troops of you became full of anxious thoughts, and lost heart, and when God became the protector of both! In God, then, let the faithful trust.

God had already succoured you at Badr, when ye were the weaker! Fear God, then, that ye may be thankful.

Then thou didst say to the faithful, 'Is it not enough for you that your Lord aideth you with three thousand angels sent down from on high?'

Aye: *but* if ye be steadfast and fear God, and the foe come upon you in hot haste, your Lord will help you with five thousand angels in their cognizances! 117-21.

At the battle of Uhud. Muḥammad was defeated, and lost two teeth by a shot from an arrow, and seventy Muslims were slain. Muḥammad comforts his followers with the hope that God would assist them with 5,000 angels. Muslims say that the angels at Badr rode on white and black horses, and had on their heads white and yellow sashes.<sup>1</sup>

Those who died in battle would have died at home.

And if ye shall be slain or die on the path of God, then pardon from God and mercy is better than all your amassings;

For if he die or be slain, verily unto God shall ye be gathered. 151-2.

Another comfort is that the time of every man's death is decreed by God, and that those who fell in the battle could not have avoided their fate had they stayed at home.

<sup>1</sup> For full details of these battles see *The Battles of Badr and of Uhud* ('The Islām Series' C.L.S.).



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Muslims slain in battle for their religion enter paradise.

Who said of their brethren while themselves sat at home, 'Had they obeyed us, they had not been slain.'

SAY: Keep back death from yourselves if ye speak truth.

And repute not those slain on God's path to be dead. Nay, alive with their Lord, are they richly sustained;

Rejoicing in what God of his bounty hath vouchsafed them, filled with joy for those who follow after them, but have not yet overtaken them, that on them nor fear shall come, nor grief. 162-4.

The object of this was to encourage Muslims to fight. Whatever might be their moral conduct, if they died in battle for their religion, they were sure to enter paradise. The truth of this may well be questioned.

The fate of unbelievers.

Let not the infidels deem that the length of days we give them is good for them! We only give them length of days that they may increase their sins! and a shameful chastisement shall be their lot. 172.

The fate of misers.

And let not those who are niggard of what God hath vouchsafed them in his bounty, think that this will be good for them—Nay, it will be bad for them—

That of which they have been niggard shall be their collar on the day of the resurrection. God's, the heritage of the Heavens and of the Earth! And God is well-informed of all ye do. 175-6.

The Muslim tradition is that the miser's wealth, on the day of the resurrection, will be made into

the shape of a serpent, twisted round his neck like a chain.

Muhammad's excuse for not working miracles.

To those who say, 'Verily, God hath enjoined us that we are not to credit an apostle until he present us a sacrifice which fire out of Heaven shall devour.'

SAY: Already have apostles before me come to you with miracles, and with that of which ye speak. Wherefore slew ye them? Tell me, if ye are men of truth. 179-80.

Several passages in the Qur'án show that Muhammad was challenged to work miracles in proof of his prophetic claim. His replies show that he did not profess to work miracles. The excuse is, 'the former prophets worked miracles and ye slew them: Why should I gratify your desire and cause fire to come down from heaven? Would ye believe?'

Muhammad's followers have been driven to invent stories detailing miracles said to have been wrought by him; as making hair grow on a boy's head, healing the eye of a soldier, or curing a horse from stumbling.

Muhammad charged with imposture.

And if they treat thee as a liar, then verily apostles have been treated as liars before thee, though they came with clear proofs of *their mission*, and with Scriptures, and with the light-giving Book. 181.

It is not true that *all* apostles were regarded as impostors. Such as were so accused were

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enabled to work such miracles as proved, even to their enemies, that they were sent by God. The scriptures are here called 'the book which enlighteneth'.

### IV. SÚRATU'N-NISÁ' (WOMEN)

#### *Madína*

THIS chapter is entitled WOMEN, because it is chiefly about laws relating to them. Directions are given to the Muslims at Madína suitable after the defeat of Uhud. Questions arose about inheritance, the treatment of widows and orphans, marriage, and other matters, which are discussed. There are numerous passages on the duty of fighting for the faith, and Christians are reproved from their beliefs. It is supposed to have been given at Madína, three or four years after the flight.

#### Duty to orphans.

And give to the orphans their property; substitute not worthless things of your own for their valuable ones, and devour not their property after adding it to your own; for this is a great crime. 2.

#### Four wives allowed. •

And if ye are apprehensive that ye shall not deal fairly with orphans, then, of *other* women who seem good in your eyes, marry *but* two, or three, or four; and if ye *still* fear that ye shall not act equitably, then one only; or the slaves whom ye have acquired: this will make justice on your part easier. Give women their dowry freely; but if of themselves they give up aught thereof to you, then enjoy it as convenient, and profitable. 3.

Islām allows polygamy on earth, and polygamy in heaven.

Rules about inheritance.

With regard to your children, God commandeth you to give the male the portion of two females; and if they be females more than two, then they shall have two-thirds of that which *their father* hath left: but if she be an only daughter, she shall have the half; and the father and mother of the deceased shall each of them have a sixth part of what he hath left, if he have a child; but if he have no child, and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have the third: and if he have brethren, his mother<sup>1</sup> shall have the sixth, after paying the bequests he shall have bequeathed and his debts. 12.

The 'legacies' are for charitable purposes. Accordingly to Muhammadan law in India, a man cannot by will devote more than one-third of his property in charity. Other rules about inheritance follow.

Punishment of adulteresses.

If any of your women be guilty of whoredom, then bring four witnesses against them from among yourselves; and if they bear witness to *the fact*, shut them up within their houses till death release them,<sup>1</sup> or God make some way for them. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Women found guilty of adultery and fornication were punished at the first rise of Islam, by being literally immured. But this was exchanged, in the case of a maiden, for one year's banishment and 100 stripes; and in the case of a married woman, for stoning (J. M. R.).

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The women found guilty were to be built into a wall and left there until they were dead. Afterwards it was enacted that maidens should be scourged and banished for a year, and married women were to be stoned. There is no such punishment for the male sex.

### Women's rights.

O believers! it is not allowed you to be heirs of your wives against their will; nor to hinder them from marrying, in order to take from them part of the dowry you had given them, unless they have been guilty of undoubted lewdness; but associate kindly with them: for if ye are estranged from them, haply ye are estranged from that in which God hath placed abundant good. 23.

### Forbidden degrees in marriage.

Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your aunts, both on the father and mother's side, and your nieces on the brother and sister's side, and your foster-mothers, and your foster-sisters, and the mothers of your wives, and your step-daughters who are your wards, born of your wives to whom ye have gone in: (but if ye have not gone in unto them, it shall be no sin in you to marry them;) and the wives of your sons who proceed out of your loins; and ye may not have two sisters; except where it is already done. Verily, God is Indulgent, Merciful!

*Forbidden to you* also are married women, except those who are in your hands as slaves: This is the law of God for you. And it is allowed you, beside this, to seek out wives by means of your wealth, with modest conduct, and without fornication. And give those with whom ye have cohabited their dowry. This is the law.

But it shall be no crime in you to make agreements over and above the law. Verily, God is Knowing, Wise! 27-8.

The prohibited degrees were adopted from the Jewish laws. What was already past was allowed to remain. Muḥammad did not consider himself bound by this law.

Man's superiority to woman; wives may be chastised.\*

Men are superior to women on account of the qualities with which God hath gifted the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they mak from their substance for them. Virtuous women are obedient, careful, during *the husband's* absence, because God hath of them been careful.<sup>1</sup> But chide those for whose refractoriness ye have cause to fear; remove them into beds apart, and scourge them: but if they are obedient to you, then seek not occasion against them: verily, God is High, Great! 38.

Women are considered an inferior kind of human beings. If disobedient they may be punished in three ways: 1. Rebuked, 2. Removed to separate apartments, 3. Beaten.

Muḥammad limited the number of strokes with which it is lawful to punish a slave; but a wife's punishment is left to the discretion of her husband.

Reconciliation of man and wife. .

And if ye fear a breach between man and wife, then send a judge chosen from his family, and a judge chosen

<sup>1</sup> By providing for them a home and the protection of a husband. Or, of *that which* God would have them care for (J. M. R.).

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from her family : if they are desirous of agreement, God will effect a reconciliation between them ; verily, God is knowing, apprised of all ! 39.

This arrangement was intended to prevent divorce. If beating was unsuccessful, arbitration might be tried.

Kindness to various classes.

Worship God, and join not aught with Him in worship. Be good to parents, and to kindred, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to a neighbour, whether kinsman or new-comer, and to a fellow traveller, and to the wayfarer, and to the slaves whom your right hands hold ; verily, God loveth not the proud, the vain boaster. 40.

Sand may be used instead of water for purification.

If ye be sick, or on a journey, or have come from the unclean place, or have touched a woman, and ye find not water, then rub pure sand, and bathe your face and your hands with it : verily, God is Lenient, Merciful. 46.

The Arabs complained that often they had no water, so the above concession was made.

The punishment of unbelievers and the rewards of believers.

Those who disbelieve our signs we will in the end cast into the fire : so oft as their skins shall be well burnt, we will change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the torment. Verily God is Mighty, Wise !

But as for those who have believed, and done the things that are right, we will bring them into gardens 'neath which the rivers flow—therein to abide eternally ;

therein shall they have wives of stainless purity: and we will bring them into aye-shadowing shades. 59-60.

### Fatalism—all from God.

Wherever ye be, death will overtake you—although ye be in lofty towers! If good fortune betide them, they say, 'This is from God;' and if evil betide them, they say, 'This is from thee.' SAY: All is from God: But what hath come to these people that they are not near to understanding what is told them?

Whatever good betideth thee is from God, and whatever betideth thee of evil is from thyself; and we have sent thee to mankind as an apostle: God is thy sufficing witness. 80-1.

### The Qur'án claims to be free from contradictions.

Can they not consider the Koran? Were it from any other than God, they would surely have found in it many contradictions. 84.

Muḥammad claims that the Qur'án is from God, because it is free from contradictions. He had to invent the doctrine of abrogation to reconcile conflicting passages. There are, however, contradictory passages in the Qur'án, and it contains several mis-statements with regard to Jewish history, e.g., confounding Gideon with David (see ii. 249-252).

### Rules about greeting.

If ye are greeted with a greeting, then greet ye with a better greeting, or *at least* return it; God taketh count of all things. 88.



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The usual Arabic salutation is, 'Peace be unto thee.' A better salutation is to add, 'and the mercy of God and His blessing.'

Death the punishment of apostasy.

If they turn back, then seize them, and slay them wherever ye find them; but take none of them as friends or helpers. 91.

Muhammad in the early part of his career said, 'Let there be no compulsion in religion' (ii. 257). Here death is the penalty for apostasy from Islám, and the law was enforced for 1,200 years. It is only in recent times that European pressure got it nominally abrogated in Turkey. In every country not yet under Christian influence it may be inflicted.

Punishment for killing a believer.

A believer killeth not a believer but by mischance: and whoso killeth a believer by mischance shall be bound to free a believer from slavery; and the blood-money shall be paid to the family of the slain, unless they convert it into alms. But if the slain believer be of a hostile people, then let him confer freedom on a slave who is a believer; and if he be of a people between whom and yourselves there is an alliance, then let the blood-money be paid to his family, and let him set free a slave who is a believer: and let him who hath not the means fast two consecutive months. This is the penance enjoined by God; and God is Knowing, Wise!

But whoever shall kill a believer of set purpose, his recompense shall be hell; for ever shall he abide in it; God shall be wrathful with him, and shall curse him: and shall get ready for him a great torment. 94-5.

The legal fine as the price of blood was 100 camels or 1,000 gold dinars. If the slain person was a woman, half that sum.

Persons saluting on a march not to be charged as unbelievers.

O believers! when ye go forth to the fight for the cause of God, be discerning, and say not to every one who meeteth you with a greeting, 'Thou art not a believer'<sup>1</sup> in your greed after the chance good things of this present life! With God are abundant spoils. Such hath been your wont in times past; but God hath been gracious to you. Be discerning, then, for God well knoweth what ye do. 96.

The desire for plunder among the Arabs was so insatiable, that even Muslims were slain on the pretence that they were infidels, and might be lawfully plundered. They were forbidden to rob and murder Muslims, for God would give them much spoil from infidels.

Examination by angels.

The angels,<sup>2</sup> when they took the souls of those who had been unjust to their own weal, demanded, 'What hath been your state?'<sup>3</sup> They said, 'We were the weak ones<sup>4</sup> of the earth.' They replied, 'Was not

<sup>1</sup> And therefore a fit subject for plunder (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Some of the Meccans after embracing Islam did not thoroughly break with the infidels and fly their country. These persons were miraculously slain by angels at Bedr. Others suppose the angels to be Nakir and Monkir, who examine the dead in the grave (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> That is, to what religion did ye belong? (J. M. R.).

<sup>4</sup> And therefore could not resist the unbelievers (J. M. R.).

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God's earth broad enough for you to flee away in? These! their home shall be Hell, and evil the passage to it. 99.

The reference is to some people of Mecca who, though professed Muslims, would not go with Muḥammad to Madīna. Such were killed by angels at the battle of Badr, but the examination was by Munkar and Nakīr, 'two fierce looking black angels with blue eyes, who visit every man in his grave, and examine him with regard to his faith in God and Muḥammad.'

The service of danger.

And when ye go forth to war in the land, it shall be no crime in you to cut short your prayers,<sup>1</sup> if ye fear lest the infidels come upon you; Verily, the infidels are your undoubted enemies!

And when ye shall have ended the prayer, make mention of God, standing, and sitting, and reclining: and as soon as ye are secure, observe prayer; for to the faithful, prayer is a prescribed duty, and for stated hours. 102, 104.

Prayer might be shortened in time of danger; but when it was over, it should be completed.

Punishment of deceivers and false accusers.

And plead not with us for those who are self-deceivers; for God loveth not him who is deceitful, criminal.

From men they hide themselves; but they cannot hide themselves from God: and when they hold nightly

<sup>1</sup> Thus the Rabbins Tr. Berachoth, iv. 4, 'He that goeth in a dangerous place may pray a short prayer' (J. M. R.).

discourses which please Him not, He is with them. God is round about their doings!

Oh! ye are they who plead in their favour in this present life; but who shall plead with God for them on the day of the resurrection? Who will be the guardian over them?

Yet he who doth evil, or shall have acted against his own weal, and then shall ask pardon of God, will find God Forgiving, Merciful:

And whoever committeth a crime, committeth it to his own hurt. And God is Knowing, Wise!

And whoever committeth an *involuntary* fault or a crime, and then layeth it on the innocent, shall surely bear *the guilt of calumny* and of a manifest crime. 97-102.

### Justice in bearing witness.

O ye who believe! stand fast to justice, when ye bear witness before God, though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kindred, whether the party be rich or poor. God is nearer than you to both. Therefore follow not passion, lest ye swerve from truth. And if ye wrest *your testimony* or stand aloof, God verily is well aware of what ye do. 134.

### No friendship with unbelievers.

Those who take the unbelievers for friends besides the faithful—do they seek honour at their hands? Verily, all honour belongeth unto God! 138.

Muslims are not allowed even to listen to the adverse criticism of unbelievers, lest they become like them. Ignorant bigotry is the strongest defence of Islām.

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Condemnation of those who receive part of the Scriptures and not the whole.

Of a truth they who believe not on God and his Apostles, and seek to separate God from his Apostles, and say, 'Some we believe, and some we believe not,' and desire to take a middle way;

These! they are veritable infidels! and for the infidels have we prepared a shameful punishment. •

And they who believe on God and his Apostles, and make no difference between them—these! we will bestow on them their reward at last. God is Gracious, Merciful!  
149-51. •

Muslims who reject the Scriptures are here called infidels or Káfirs.

Jesus not really crucified.

And for their saying, 'Verily we have slain the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, an Apostle of God.' Yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness. And they who differed about him were in doubt concerning him: No sure knowledge had they about him, but followed only an opinion, and they did not really slay him, but God took him up to Himself. And God is Mighty, Wise! 157.

The above words express the belief of Muslims, namely, that Jesús did not actually die, but that God took Him away and another resembling Him was crucified. Súra iii. 48 admits His death. 'When God said, O Jesús, verily I will cause Thee to die, and will take Thee up to myself, and deliver Thee from those who believe not.' The Jewish prophets, as Isaiah and Daniel,

foretold the death of Christ. He Himself often said that He would die. Jewish, Heathen, and Christian histories attest the fact of His death. It was only a few obscure Christian heretics that denied it. This one passage refutes the claim of Muḥammad to be a prophet of God.

The Psalms (Zabûr) given to David.

And to David gave we Psalms. 161.

Christians reproved for their beliefs.

O ye people of the Book! overstep not bounds in your religion;<sup>1</sup> and of God, speak only truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God, and his Word which he conveyed into Mary, and a Spirit<sup>2</sup> proceeding from himself. Believe therefore in God and his apostles, and say not, 'Three:' (there is a Trinity) —Forbear—it will be better for you. God is only one God! Far be it from His glory that He should have a son! His, whatever is in the Heavens, and whatever is in the Earth! And God is a sufficient Guardian. 169.

Some supposed the 'three Gods' to be God, Jesus, and Mary; but the passage is equally directed against those who acknowledge the Christian Trinity, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Whenever the Qur'ân refers to Christianity, it is generally to inveigh against the idea that God has a son. If it were to be

<sup>1</sup> By believing too much, like the Christians who regarded Jesus as God; or too little, like the Jews who would not believe on Muḥammad (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, a Being possessing a Spirit (J. M. R.).

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understood in the ordinary sense, this would be blasphemy.

### V. SURATU'L-MA'IDA (THE TABLE)

#### *Revealed at Madina*

THIS chapter treats of a variety of matters, but chiefly of the following: (1) The pilgrimage to Mecca. (2) Denunciation of the Jews. (3) Against Christian doctrines. (4) A warning not to make friends with Jews or Christians. The verses belong to different periods.

#### Forbidden food.

That which dieth of itself, and blood, and swine's flesh, and all that hath been sacrificed under the invocation of any other name than that of God, and the strangled, and the killed by a blow, or by a fall, or by goring,<sup>1</sup> and that which hath been eaten by beasts of prey, unless ye make it clean *by giving the death-stroke yourselves*, and that which hath been sacrificed on the blocks of stone,<sup>2</sup> is forbidden you: and to make division *of the slain by consulting the arrows*,<sup>3</sup> is impiety in you. Woe this day on those who forsake your religion! And fear them not, but fear Me. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Tract Cholin, c. 3 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *on blocks or shafts of stone*. These were set up by the pagan Arabs in front of their houses for the purpose of sacrificing thereon. See Freytag's Einl. p. 462, and Tr. Cholin, pp. 39, 40, 41 (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> It was the custom to draw lots for joints of a camel with arrows, some feathered and others unfeathered, kept for this purpose in the temple of Mecca. See Pocock, Spec. Hist. Ar., under the word Hobal (J. M. R.).

It has already been explained that the Bismil-láh must be uttered before killing the animal (see Súra ii. 168).

The food of Jews and Christians might be eaten.

This day, things healthful are legalized to you, and the meats of those who have received the Scriptures are allowed to you, as your meats are to them. 7.

Some Muslims in India have adopted caste notions from the Hindus, and will not eat with Christians. This is contrary to the Qur'án.

Muslims may marry Jewish or Christian women.

*And you are permitted to marry virtuous women who are believers, and virtuous women of those who have received the Scriptures before you, when you shall have provided them their portions, living chastely with them without fornication, and without taking concubines. Vain the works of him who shall renounce the faith! and in the next world he shall be of the lost. 7.*

### Laws of purifications.

O Believers! when ye address yourselves to prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbow, and wipe your heads, and your feet to the ankles.

And if ye have become unclean, then purify yourselves. But if ye are sick, or on a journey, or if one of you come from the place of retirement, or if ye have touched women, and ye find no water, then take clean sand and rub your faces and your hands with it. God desireth not to lay a burden upon you, but he desireth to purify you, and He would fill up the measure of His favour upon you, that ye may be grateful. 8-9.



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God requires more than outward purity in His worshippers.

Charges of imposture brought against Muḥammad.

But they who are infidels and treat our signs as lies —these shall be mated with Hell fire. 13.

This verse shows that even during his lifetime Muḥammad was charged with imposture. His only argument in reply was the threat of hell.

The divinity of Christ denied.

Infidels now are they who say, 'Verily God is the Messiah Ibn Maryam (son of Mary)!' SAY: And who could aught obtain from God, if he chose to destroy the Messiah Ibn Maryam, and his mother, and all who are on the earth together? 19.

In the earlier chapters of the Qur'án, Christians are spoken of as 'the people of the book'. When his power had been firmly established, in some cases, as in the present, he spoke differently of them.

Punishment for theft.

As to the thief, whether man or woman, cut ye off their hands in recompense for their doings.<sup>1</sup> This is a penalty by way of warning from God himself. And God is Mighty, Wise. 41.

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad is said by the early traditionists to have punished a woman who had been guilty of theft in this manner while on the route to Mecca previous to its capture. We are, therefore, able to fix the date of verses 39-44 (J. M. R.).

This punishment is still inflicted in some Muhammadan countries. It is noticed in the Review.

Law of retaliation.

And therein<sup>1</sup> have we enacted for them, 'Life for life and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds retaliation:—Whoso shall compromise it as alms shall have therein the expiation of *his sin*; and whoso will not judge by what God hath sent down—such are the transgressors. 42.

If the injured person forgave the transgressors, no punishment was to be inflicted.

The Scriptures called the book of God.

Verily, we have sent down the law (Towrat) wherein are guidance and light. By it did the prophets who professed Islam judge the Jews; and the doctors and the teachers *judged* by that portion of the Book of God, of which they were the keepers and the witnesses. Therefore, *O Jews!* fear not men but fear me; and barter not away my signs for a mean price! And whoso will not judge by what God hath sent down—such are the Infidels. 48.

Jesus taught the gospel given by God.

And in the footsteps of the prophets caused we Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow, confirming the law which was before him: and we gave him the Evangel with its guidance and light, confirmatory of the preceding Law; a guidance and warning to those who fear God:

And that the people of the Evangel may judge according to what God hath sent down therein. And

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xxi. 23-7 (J. M. R.).

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whoso will not judge by what God hath sent down—  
such are the perverse. 50-1.

The 'law' sent down before Jesus was the Taurát; the gospel or Injíl, is said to have been given by God. Both are declared to be divine. Those who judge not according to that which God hath revealed, are 'transgressors'.

Jews or Christians not to be taken as friends.

O Believers! take not the Jews or Christians<sup>1</sup> as friends. They are but one another's friends. If any one of you taketh them for his friends, he surely is one of them! God will not guide the evil doers. 56.

The contempt here shewn for Jews and Christians is the spirit of Islám.

Jews changed into apes and swine.

They whom God hath cursed and with whom He hath been angry—some of them hath He changed into apes and swine; and they who worship Thagout are in evil plight, and have gone far astray from the right path! 65.

See also, Súra ii. 61. The legend is that in the days of David some Jews dwelt at Elath, on the Red Sea. On the night of the Sabbath it is

<sup>1</sup> This may refer to proposals made to the Muslims to enter into alliance with the Jews and Christians against the heathen, after the reverse at Ohod. Lane observes (Mod. Egyptians, i, 358) with regard to this precept, that 'of the leading features of the character of the Mooslims none is more remarkable than their religious pride. They regard persons of every other faith as the children of perdition; and such the Mooslim is early taught to despise.' They are, however, 'as remarkable for their toleration as for their contempt of unbelievers' (J. M. R.).

said that the fish came in great numbers to the shore to tempt them. Some of the inhabitants broke the command to keep the Sabbath; whereupon David cursed them, and God changed them into apes and swine.

The law and gospel to be observed.

SAY: O people of the Book! ye have no ground to stand on, until ye observe the Law and the Evangel, and that which hath been sent down to you from your Lord.<sup>1</sup> 72.

This is another testimony of the Qur'án to the Taurát and Injil.

The divinity of Christ and the Trinity denied.

Infidels now are they who say, 'God is the Messiah, Son of Mary;' for the Messiah said, 'O children of Israel! worship God, my Lord and your Lord.' Whoever shall join other gods with God, God shall forbid him the Garden, and his abode shall be the Fire; and the wicked shall have no helpers.

They surely are Infidels who say, 'God is the third of three:' for there is no God but one God: and if they refrain not from what they say, a grievous chastisement shall light on such of them as are Infidels. 76-7.

Expiation of oaths. •

God will not punish you for a mistaken word in your oaths: but he will punish you in regard to an oath taken seriously. Its expiation shall be to feed ten poor

<sup>1</sup> That is, the Koran. The Jew was to retain a faith in the Towrá, or Law; the Christian in the Injil, or Gospel; but both Jews and Christians were to receive the Koran as the complement of both (J. M. R.).

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persons with such middling *food* as ye feed your own families with, or to clothe them; or to set free a captive. But he who cannot find means, shall fast three days. This is the expiation of your oaths when ye shall have sworn. Keep then your oaths. 91.

Thoughtless oaths used in conversation are regarded as 'inconsiderate words', not deserving punishment. This is a tampering with truth. Jesus Christ teaches that we must give account of all our words.

### Hunting and fishing during pilgrimage.

It is lawful for you to fish in the sea, and to eat *fish*, as provision for you and for those who travel; but it is unlawful for you to hunt by land while ye are still on pilgrimage: fear ye God, therefore, before whom ye shall be assembled. 97.

### The Ka'ba and pilgrimage.

God hath appointed the Caaba, the sacred house, to be a station for mankind, and the sacred month, and the offering, and its ornaments. This, that ye may know that God knoweth all that is in the heavens and on the earth, and that God hath knowledge of everything. 98.

The Ka'ba has already been described (see Súra ii. 144-5). The pilgrimage must be performed in the appointed month, otherwise a visit to Mecca is of no value. Animals offered in sacrifice were ornamented with a garland.

The miracles of Jesus.

When He shall say: O Jesus! Son of Mary! call to mind my favour upon thee and upon thy mother, when I strengthened thee with the Holy Spirit, that thou shouldest speak<sup>1</sup> to men *alike* in the cradle, and when grown up:

And when I taught thee the Scripture, and Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel: and thou didst create of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by my leave, and didst breathe into it, and by my leave it became a bird; and thou didst heal the blind and the leper, by my leave; and when, by my leave thou didst bring forth the dead; and when I withheld the children of Israel from thee, when thou hadst come to them with clear tokens: and such of them as believed not said, 'This is nought but plain sorcery;'<sup>2</sup> 109-10.

The pretended miracle of Jesus speaking in the cradle has been noticed under Súra iii. 41. There it is said that God taught Jesus the scriptures. Another legend is that Jesus made a clay bird speak. Súra iii. 43. It is also alleged that God kept the Jews from putting Jesus to death. See Súra iii. 48 and Súra iv. 156.

Jesus did not teach His disciples to worship Himself and His Mother.

And when God shall say—'O Jesus, Son of Mary: hast thou said unto mankind—"Take me and my mother

<sup>1</sup> See Evang. Infant. c. i, Invenimus in libro Josephi Pontificis qui vixit tempore Christi, Jesum locutum esse, et quidem cum in cunis jaceret, etc. The date of verse 108 to the end is uncertain (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Precisely the same expression is applied to our Lord in the Arabic Evang. Infantiae, c. 36 at the end, which also relates the story of the Birds (J. M. R.).

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as two Gods, beside God?'' He shall say—'Glory be unto Thee! it is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth; had I said that, verily thou wouldest have known it: Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee; for Thou well knowest things unseen!'

'I spake not to them aught but that which thou didst bid me—"Worship God, my Lord and your Lord;"'  
16-17.

Muhammad's acquaintance with Christianity was very slight. The Christian Trinity was not the Father, Mother, Son. Jesus is made to say, 'I know not what is in thee.' This contradicts His declaration in John x. 15.

### VI. SÚRATU'L-AN'ÁM (CATTLE)

#### *Revealed at Mecca*

THE chapter derives its title from the frequent mention of cattle in connexion with the idolatrous rites of the people of Mecca. From the command to withdraw from idolaters, Muhammad had evidently in view his flight to Madína.

The unbelief of the Quraish.

And had we sent down to thee a Book written on parchment, and they had touched it with their hands, the infidels had surely said, 'This is nought but plain sorcery.'

They say, too, 'Unless an angel be sent down to him. . . .' But if we had sent down an angel, their

judgement would have come on them at once,<sup>1</sup> and they would have had no respite. 7-8.

The Quraish did not see anything in the Qur'án sufficiently miraculous to convince them of its heavenly origin. They would not have believed even if an angel had come down to them from heaven.

The Qur'án revealed by God.

This Kóran hath been revealed to me that I should warn you by it, and all whom it shall reach. 19.

Muslims believe that every word and letter in the Qur'án has been revealed by God.

Scoffers at the Qur'án.

The infidels say, 'Verily, this is nothing but fables of the ancients.' 24.

Some men, after hearing Muḥammad repeating the Qur'án, said that he only told a parcel of foolish stories.

Unbelievers after death.

Lost are they who deny the meeting with God until 'the Hour' cometh suddenly upon them! Then will they say, 'Oh, our sighs for past negligence of this hour!' and they shall bear their burdens on their back! Will not that be evil with which they shall be burdened? 31.

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *their affair would have been decided*. In that case there would no longer have been an opportunity for the warnings of the prophets and for repentance, but the angels would at once have executed the divine judgements (J. M. R.).



'The hour' denotes the day of the judgement. The Muslim idea is that the evil deeds of the wicked will be a heavy burden upon their backs.

Beasts and birds to be brought to judgement.

No kind of beast is there on earth nor fowl that flieth with its wings, but is a folk<sup>1</sup> like you: nothing have we passed over 'in the Book: 2 then unto their Lord shall they be gathered. 39.

If beasts and fowls are to be judged, why not snakes, fishes, and insects? Christianity teaches that we differ from them in being accountable beings.

Punishment of those who charge Muḥammad with imposture.

But whoso shall charge our signs with falsehood, on them shall fall a punishment for their wicked doings. 49.

This accusation is mentioned for the sixth time in this chapter. It shows how often it had been brought.

God's omniscience and omnipresence.

And with Him are the keys<sup>3</sup> of the secret things; none knoweth them but He: He knoweth whatever is on the land and in the sea; and no leaf falleth but He knoweth it; neither is there a grain in the dark-

<sup>1</sup> A community. Comp. Prov. xxx. 25, 26. Animals as well as mankind are under the control of God, are held within the limits of his decrees, are accountable to him, and will stand before him in the judgement (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Of the Eternal decrees (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> The Rabbins speak of the three keys in the hand of God. Tr. Tanith, fol. I (J. M. R.).

nesses of the earth, nor a thing green or sere, but it is noted in a distinct writing.<sup>1</sup>

It is He who taketh your souls at night,<sup>2</sup> and knoweth what ye have merited in the day: then he awaketh you therein, that the set life-term may be fulfilled: then unto Him shall ye return: and ther shall he declare to you that which ye have wrought. 59-60.

The 'Perspicuous Book' denotes the book in which God's decrees are written, and every event recorded.

Observance of the times of prayer.

And observe ye the times of prayer, and fear ye God: for it is He to whom ye shall be gathered. 71.

There are five stated times of prayer. 1. From dawn to sunrise. 2. When noon is past. 3. Midway between noon and sunset. 4. A few minutes after sunset. 5. From sunset till midnight. The whole must be in Arabic.

Abraham's testimony against idolatry.

And *remember* when Abraham said to his father Azar, Takest thou images as gods? Verily, I see that thou and thy people are in manifest error.

And thus did we shew Abraham the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth,<sup>3</sup> that he might be established in knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> On the preserved tablet, on which are written the decrees of God (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, during sleep. See Sura xxxix. 43. Or, *layeth to rest*. Mar. renders literally, *defungi faciet vos*, id est, obdormiscere. Thus also Beidh. But see the use of the same word in the next verse (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Gen. xv. 5 (J. M. R.).

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And when the night overshadowed him, he beheld a star. 'This,' said he, 'is my Lord:' but when it set, he said, 'I love not *gods* which set.'

And when he beheld the moon uprising, 'This,' said he, 'is my Lord:' but when it set, he said, 'Surely, if my Lord guide me not, I shall surely be of those who go astray.'

And when he beheld the sun uprise, he said, 'This is my Lord; this is greatest.' But when it set, he said, 'O my people! I share not with you the guilt of joining gods with God; 74-8.

Azar is the name given by Muslims to Abraham's father, called Terah in the Bible. Terah was an idolater.

### The Prophets after Abraham.

This is our reasoning with which we furnished Abraham against his people: We uplift to grades of *wisdom* whom we will; Verily thy Lord is Wise, Knowing.

And we gave him Isaac and Jacob, and guided both aright; and we had before guided Noah; and among the descendants of *Abraham*, David and Solomon, and Job and Joseph, and Moses and Aaron: Thus do we recompense the righteous:

And Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias: all were just persons:

And Ismael and Elisha and Jonas and Lot: all these have we favoured above mankind: 83-6.

Of twenty-five prophets mentioned in the Qur'án, eighteen are here named. The order in which they are mentioned shews Muhammad's ignorance of history. Several of them, as Zacharias, Ismael, and Lot, were not prophets.

The Jews accused of suppressing part of the Scriptures.

No just estimate do they form of God when they say, 'Nothing hath God sent down to man.' SAY: Who sent down the Book which Moses brought, a light and guidance to man, which ye set down on paper, publishing part, but concealing most: though ye have *now* been taught that which neither ye nor your fathers knew? SAY: It is God: then leave them in their pastime of cavillings.<sup>1</sup> 91.

The Jews are here, as frequently in the Qur'án, accused of suppressing and altering those parts of their scriptures which referred, according to the Musalman theory, to the mission of Muhammad.

What food may be eaten.

Eat<sup>2</sup> of that over which the name of God hath been pronounced, if ye believe in his signs.

And why eat ye not of that over which the name of God hath been pronounced, since He hath made plain to you what He hath forbidden you, save as to that which is forced upon you? But indeed many mislead others by their appetites, through lack of knowledge. Verily, thy Lord! He best knoweth the transgressors. 118-9.

<sup>1</sup> This verse and the following were probably added at Medina after the Hejira; at least it is difficult to conceive that Mahammad would have ventured thus to have written at Mecca (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Verses 118-121 seem misplaced, and should probably follow 154 (J. M. R.).

## 54' SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Before any animal is killed for food, 'In the name of God' must be pronounced. Only, if necessary, may other food be eaten.

Believers and unbelievers.

And whom God shall please to guide, that man's breast will He open to Islám; but whom He shall please to mislead, strait and narrow will He make his breast, as though he were mounting up into the very Heavens! Thus doth God inflict dire punishment on those who believe not. 125.

This verse makes man's salvation depend entirely upon the will of God. God opens the hearts of Muslims; He leads infidels into error that He may inflict on them a terrible punishment. This is horrible doctrine.

O race of Djinn and men! came not apostles to you from among yourselves, rehearsing my signs to you, and warning you of the meeting of this your day? 130.

The jinns were supposed to be supernatural beings created, like the devils, of fire instead of clay, and possessed of miraculous powers. They are devoutly believed in by Muslims, and are supposed to be subject to the same controlling laws as mankind, and to have also had prophets sent to them.

Some of them were good, but generally they were evil. Some are said to have been converted to Islám.

### The idolaters of Mecca rebuked.

Moreover, they set apart a portion of the fruits and cattle<sup>1</sup> which he hath produced, and say, 'This for God'—so deem they—'And this for his companions, whom we associate with Him.' But that which is for these companions of theirs, cometh not to God; yet that which is for God, cometh to the companions! All do they judge.

Thus have the companion gods induced many of these, who join them with God, to slay their children, that they might ruin them, and throw the cloak of confusion over their religion. But if God had pleased, they had not done this. Therefore, leave them and their devices.  
137-8.

The idolaters divided the produce of their fields and flocks into two parts—one for God and the other for inferior deities, here called 'companions'. Should the portion of God prove greater at the time of harvest, they changed the portions, giving the larger portion to the gods.

### Evil customs of the Quraish exposed.

They also say, 'These cattle and fruits are sacred: none may taste them but whom we please:' so deem they—'And there are cattle, whose backs should be

<sup>1</sup> It appears to have been the custom of the idolatrous Arabs to set apart one portion of their fields for the Supreme God, and the other for the inferior gods represented by their idols. If any of the fruit happened to fall from the part consecrated to the idols into that consecrated to God, they restored it, but if the reverse occurred, they gave it to the idols. God, said they, is rich and can dispense with it. The secret, however, was that the idols' portion was reserved for the priests, Beidhawi. Freytag mentions the names of 73 idols worshipped by the Arab tribes, previous to Islam (Einl., pp. 270 and 342-357) and generally with Allah, as Supreme God (J. M. R.).

## 56' SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'AN

exempt from labour.' And there are cattle over which they do not pronounce the name of God: inventing *in all this* a lie against Him. For their inventions shall He reward them.

And they say, 'That which is in the wombs of these cattle is allowed to our males, and forbidden to our wives;' but if it prove abortive, both partake of it. *God* shall reward them for their distinctions! Knowing, Wise is He. 139-40.

Among the Arabs one tree was dedicated to the gods and allowed to grow untouched. Some animals they were forbidden to eat or ride upon. Some might be eaten by the men and not by the women, and vice versa. Such customs are condemned.

Child murder forbidden.

Lost are they who, in their ignorance, have foolishly slain their children, and have forbidden that which God hath given them for food, devising an untruth against God! Now have they erred; and they were not rightly guided. 141.

Female infanticide prevailed among the Arabs, as among some Rajputs in India, till it was stopped. Daughters were buried alive as soon as they were born if the parents thought that they could not maintain them.

The law given to Moses a perfect rule.

Then <sup>1</sup> gave we the Book to Moses—complete for him who should do right, and a decision for all matters,

<sup>1</sup> This very abrupt transition to Jewish history seems to indicate that a passage between this and the preceding verse is lost (J. M. R.).

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and a guidance, and a mercy, that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord. 155.

Muhammad the first Muslim.

SAY: My prayers and my worship and my life and my death are unto God, Lord of the Worlds. He hath no associate. This am I commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims. 160.

Entire consecration of self to God is what Muhammad here declares to be the religion of Islām. No Saviour.

SAY: Shall I seek any other Lord than God, when He is Lord of all things? No soul shall labour but for itself; and no burdened one shall bear another's burden. At last ye shall return to your Lord, and he will declare that to you about which you differ. 184.

## VII. SÚRATU'L-A'RÁF (THE PARTITION WALL)

*Revealed at Mecca*

THE title is derived from the reference to the *partition wall* between heaven and hell, which is called *al-A'raf*. It contains chiefly accounts of rejection of certain prophets and the judgements which followed. In like manner, if the Quraish of Mecca rejected Muhammad, similar judgements would befall them. It is supposed to have been written shortly before the flight. Space does not allow all the prophets to be mentioned. Only special incidents can be noticed.



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The tree of life mistaken for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Then Satan whispered them to shew them their nakedness, which had been hidden from them both. And he said, 'This tree<sup>1</sup> hath your Lord forbidden you, only lest ye should become angels, or lest ye should become immortals.' 19.

Eve was tempted to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (see Genesis, iii. 1-7, 22).

Indecent customs forbidden.

And when *the wicked* commit some filthy deed, they say, 'We found our fathers practising it, and to us hath God commanded it'—SAY: God enjoineth not filthy deeds. Will ye speak of God ye know not what? 27.

The Quraish went round the Ka'ba naked, defending it on the ground of custom. It is here forbidden.

Worshippers to be decently clad.

O children of Adam! wear your goodly apparel when ye repair to any mosque,<sup>2</sup> and eat ye and drink; but exceed not, for He loveth not those who exceed. 29.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Sura xx. 118 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> For full information as to the clothing of the ancient Arabians see Freyt. Einl., pp. 295-327. The Koreisch (we are told in Sirat Arrasul, fol. 26, and Beidh.), in order to instil a deep respect for the Caaba and other holy places into the minds of the Arabians, had forbidden all food during the processions, and required that no clothes, except those borrowed from Meccans, should be worn, or that those who wore their own should devote them to God as holy vestments. The consequence was that most of the pilgrims visited the holy places in perfect nudity. Hence the precept in the text (J. M. R.).

When men go to the mosque they should have good apparel, yet they should not go in clothes adorned with gold and silver, lest they should seem proud.

The punishment of those who charge Muḥammad with imposture.

O children of Adam! there shall come to you Apostles from among yourselves, rehearsing my signs to you; and whoso shall fear God and do good work, no fear shall be upon them, neither shall they be put to grief.

But they who charge our signs with falsehood, and turn away from them in their pride, shall be inmates of the fire: for ever shall they abide therein.

And who is worse than he who deviseth a lie of God, or treateth our signs as lies? 33-5.

Muḥammad, by his frequent references to this, shows the suspicion which attend fraud, and does not exist among honest truthful minds.

The veil of al-A'raf.

And between them shall be a partition; and on *the wall* AL ARAF<sup>1</sup> shall be men who will know all,<sup>2</sup> by

<sup>1</sup> 'On this wall (the name of which is derived from *Arafa*, "to know", with allusion to the employment of those upon it) will stand those whose good and evil works are equal, and are not, therefore, deserving of either Paradise or Gehenna. The idea, which is analogous to that of Purgatory, may be derived from the Talmud. Thus in the Midrasch on Eccl. iii. 14, "How much space is there between the two" (Paradise and Hell)? R. Jochanan saith, a wall; R. Acha, a span: others hold them to be so close that a person may see from one into the other.' See Plato's *Phaed.* 62 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, they will know the inmates of Paradise by their whiteness, and the people of Hell by the blackness of their faces (J. M. R.).

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their tokens, and they shall cry to the inmates of Paradise, 'Peace be on you!' but they shall not *yet* enter it, although they long to do so.

And when their eyes are turned towards the inmates of the Fire, they shall say, 'O our Lord! place us not with the offending people.' 44-5.

This may have been copied from the great gulf mentioned in Luke xvi. 26 as separating paradise from the place of torment.

Húd rejected by the tribe of 'Ád<sup>1</sup> and their fate.

And to Ad<sup>2</sup> *we sent* their brother Houd.<sup>3</sup> 'O my people!' said he, 'worship God: ye have no other god than him: Will ye not then fear Him?'

Said the unbelieving chiefs among his people, 'We certainly perceive that thou art unsound of mind; and we surely deem thee an impostor.'

He said, 'O my people! it is not unsoundness of mind in me, but I am an Apostle from the Lord of the Worlds.

<sup>1</sup> The rejection of Noah is previously mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> The two tribes of Ad and Themoud—the latter of whom is mentioned by Diod. Sic. and Ptolemy—lay to the north of Mecca in the direct line of traffic between the countries to the north and to the south, and both probably\*disappeared with its cessation, when the Arabs were no longer held in check by the Romans. The traditions adopted by Muhammad attribute this to the divine vengeance, throughout the Koran, and were derived by him from the popular legends of Arabia. See Freyt. Einl., p. 12 (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> On Houd, see Geiger, pp. 113-119. He supposes him to be the Eber of the Bible. But Mr. Muir suggests that both Houd and Saleh may have been persecuted Jewish or Christian emissaries and teachers, whose rejection was thus recast by Muhammad. See note on verse 71 (J. M. R.).

The messages of my Lord do I announce to you, and I am your faithful<sup>1</sup> counsellor.

Marvel ye that a warning hath come to you from your Lord through one of yourselves that He may warn you? Remember how he hath made you the successors of the people of Noah, and increased you in tallness of stature. Remember then the favours of God, that it may haply be well with you.'

They said, 'Art thou come to us in order that we may worship one God alone, and leave what our fathers worshipped? Then bring that upon us with which thou threatenest us, if thou be a man of truth.'

He said, 'Vengeance and wrath shall suddenly light on you from your Lord. Do ye dispute with me about names that you and your fathers have given your idols, and for which God hath sent you down no warrant? Wait ye then, and I too will wait with you.'

And we delivered him, and those who were on his side, by our mercy, and we cut off, to the last man, those who had treated our signs as lies, and who were not believers. 63-70.

'Ád was a powerful Arab tribe, zealously given to idolatry. Húd is supposed by the Jews to have been Heber, but about this there is no certainty.

Sálh rejected by the Thamúdites; their destruction.

And to Themoud *we sent* their brother Saleh.<sup>2</sup> He said, O my people! worship God: ye have no other god than Him: now hath a clear proof of my mission come

<sup>1</sup> Or, *entrusted*, i.e. with the office of apostle (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Saleh—according to Bochart, the Peleg of Gen. xi. 16, D'Herbelot, B. O. 740, makes him the Schelah of Gen. xi. 13, See v. 63, n. and p. 220, n (J. M. R.).

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to you from your Lord, this she-camel of God being a sign to you: therefore let her go at large to pasture on God's earth: and touch her not to harm her, lest a grievous chastisement seize you.

And remember how he hath made you successors to the Adites, and given you dwellings on the earth, so that on its plains ye build castles, and hew out houses in the hills. And bear in mind the benefits of God, and lay not the earth waste with deeds of licence.

Said the chiefs of his people puffed up with pride, to those who were esteemed weak, even to those of them who believed, 'What! know ye for certain that Saleh is sent by his Lord?' They said, 'Truly we believe in that with which he hath been sent.'

Then said those proud men, 'Verily, we reject that in which ye believe.'

And they ham-strung the she-camel, and rebelled against their Lord's command, and said, 'O Saleh, let thy menaces be accomplished upon us if thou art one of the Sent Ones.'

Then the earthquake surprised them: and in the morning they were found *dead* on their faces in their dwellings.

So he turned away from them, and said, 'O my people! I did indeed announce to you the message of my Lord: and I gave you faithful counsel, but ye love not faithful counsellors. 71-7.

A prophet, named Šālih is still worshipped by some of the Arabs about Mount Sinai. They pretend to show near the top of the mountain a foot-print of the prophet's she-camel. Their goats are sometimes milked into it to make them fruitful.

Sha'ib<sup>1</sup> rejected, the Madairites and their doom.

And we sent to Madian their brother Shoaib. He said, 'O my people! worship God; ye have no other God than Him: now hath a clear sign come to you from your Lord: give therefore the full in measures and weights; take from no man his chattels, and commit no disorder on the earth after it has been made so good. This will be better for you, if you will believe it.

Said the chiefs of his people puffed up with pride, 'We will surely banish thee, O Shoaib, and thy fellow-believers from our cities, unless indeed ye shall come back to our religion.' 'What!' said he, 'though we abhor it?' 83-86.

Sha'ib is supposed to represent Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. No miracles are recorded of him, yet Muslim writers say that when he desired to ascend a mountain it stooped down to receive him, and then rose up to its ordinary place. The dreadful fate of the people is set forth as a warning to those who would charge Muhammad with imposture.

The death of the male children of the Israelites in Egypt.

Then said the chiefs of Pharaoh's people--'Wilt thou let Moses and his people go to spread disorders in our land, and desert thee and thy gods?' He said, 'We will cause their male children to be slain and preserve their females alive: and verily we shall be masters over them.' 124. •

<sup>1</sup> The rejection of Lot is previously described,

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The male children were ordered to be put to death before the birth of Moses—not after Moses came to Pharaoh. Moses himself was to have been destroyed (see Exodus i).

(Verses 104–147 contain a long account of Moses, his mission to Pharaoh, the contest with the magicians, the ten plagues, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and God's appearance on the Mount).

Aaron and the golden calf.

And the people of Moses took during his absence a calf made of their ornaments, and ruddy like gold, and lowing.<sup>1</sup> Saw they not that it could not speak to them, nor guide them in the way?

Yet they took it *for a God* and became offenders!

But when they repented, and saw that they had erred, they said, Truly if our Lord have not mercy on us, and forgive us, we shall surely be of those who perish.

And when Moses returned to his people, wrathful, angered, he said, 'Evil is it that ye have done next upon my departure. Would ye hasten on the judgements of your Lord?' And he threw down the tables, and seized his brother by the head and dragged him unto him. Said he, 'Son of my mother! the people thought me weak, and had well nigh slain me. Make not mine enemies to rejoice over me, and place me not among the wrong doers.'

<sup>1</sup> Sale and others render *having a body corporeal*, of which the commentators give no satisfactory explanation. I have adopted that given by Freytag in v. That the calf lowed in consequence of Samaël having entered into it, is one of the traditions of the Talmud. Pirke R. Eliezer, c. 45 (J. M. R.).

He said, 'O Lord, forgive me and my brother, and bring us into thy mercy; for of those who shew mercy thou art the most merciful.'

Verily as to those who took the calf as a god, wrath from their Lord shall overtake them, and shame in this present life: for thus recompense we the devisers of a lie. 146-151.

The worship of the golden calf is described in Exodus xxxii. 1-24. There is no mention that the calf lowed, nor that Moses seized Aaron by the head. These are additions by Muhammad.

Muhammad the illiterate Prophet.

SAY to them: O men! Verily I am God's apostle to you all;

Whose is the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth! There is no God but He! He maketh alive and killeth! Therefore believe on God, and his Apostle—the unlettered Prophet—who believeth in God and his word. And follow him that ye may be guided aright. 158.

Muhammad, it is said, could neither read nor write. He was hence called the 'illiterate prophet'. This is sometimes used as an argument that the Qur'an came from God; but the words can also be translated 'Prophet of the Gentiles'. 'This distinguishes him from a prophet belonging to the "people of the Book", i.e. Jews or Christians, and is meant to show that he was not acquainted with the books of preceding prophets. This ignorance is shown by the confused order in which he places them. He



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seems to have felt his weakness in this respect for God is represented as saying: "of some apostles we have told thee before: of other apostles we have not told thee."—*Súratu'n-Nisá'* (iv.) 162.<sup>1</sup>

### Water from the Rock in the Wilderness.

And we divided *the Israelites* into twelve tribes, as nations; and we revealed unto Moses when the people asked drink of him—"Strike the rock with thy staff:" and there gushed forth from it twelve fountains—the men all knew their drinking places. And we caused clouds to overshadow them, and sent down upon them the manna and the quails. . . . 'Eat of the good things with which we have supplied you.' But it was not us whom they injured, but they injured their own selves. 160.

The correct account is found in Exodus xvii. 1-7. It is not said that there gushed out twelve fountains. Muḥammad may have confounded this with the twelve wells at Elim (Exodus xv. 27).

The Sabbath breakers changed into apes.

And <sup>2</sup> ask them about the city that stood by the sea, when its *inhabitants* broke the Sabbath; when their fish came to them on their Sabbath day appearing openly, but came not to them on the day when they kept no Sabbath. Thus did we make trial of them, for that they were evildoers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faith of Islám, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> This and the next six verses are supposed to have been added at Medina (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Sura [xci.] ii. 61. No trace of this legend is to be found in the Talmudists. The city is said to have been Aila (Elath) on the Red Sea (J. M. R.).

And when some of them said, why warn ye those whom God would destroy or chastise with terrible chastisement? they said, For our own excuse with your Lord; and that they may fear Him.

And when they forgot their warnings: we delivered those who had forbidden evil; and we inflicted a severe chastisement on those who had done wrong, for that they were evildoers.

But when they proudly persisted in that which was forbidden, we said to them, 'Become scouted apes;' and then thy Lord declared that until the day of the resurrection, he would surely send against them<sup>1</sup> (the Jews) those who should evil entreat and chastise them: for prompt is thy Lord to punish; and He is Forgiving, Merciful. 163-6.

This supposed occurrence is also mentioned in Súra II. It is said that in the time of David some Israelites dwelt at Elath on the Red Sea. To tempt them God made fishes come to them on the Sabbath day, but not on other days. Some caught the fish on the Sabbath day. David cursed them, and God changed them into apes. Can we believe that God made fish to come on a Sabbath day to tempt people? Their being changed into apes is another fable.

Mount Sinai shaken over the Israelites.

And when we shook the mount<sup>2</sup> over them as if it had been a shadow, and they thought it falling upon

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in allusion to Deut. xxviii. 49, 50 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Sinai—which, however, is not mentioned in the Koran as the place where the law was given. Comp. 'I will cover you with the mountain like a roof.' Abodah Sar. 2, 2. Thus also in Tract

them . . . 'Receive, *said we*, with steadfastness what we have brought you, and remember what is therein, to the end that ye may fear God.' 170.

The legend is that the Israelites refusing to receive the laws of Moses, God tore up the mountain by the roots and shook it over their heads to terrify them into compliance. The Bible says nothing about such a tremendous miracle. It is a Jewish fable adopted by Muhammad.

Many jinns and men created for hell.

Many, moreover, of the Djinn and men have we created for Hell. Hearts have they with which they understand not, and eyes have they with which they see not, and ears have they with which they hearken not. They are like the brutes: Yea, they go more astray: these are the heedless. 178.

God is here said to have created many jinns and men for the express purpose of filling hell. This is horrible teaching.

God's excellent titles.

Most excellent titles hath God: <sup>1</sup> by these call ye on

Sabbath, f. 88, 1, 'R. Avdimi . . . saith, These words teach us that the Holy One, blessed be He, turned the mountain over them like a vessel, and said to them, 'If ye will receive the law, well; but if not, there shall be your grave.' This tradition is still held by the Jews. See D. Lewis Pent. Prayers, fol. 150. Its origin is a misunderstanding of Ex. xix. 17, rightly rendered in the E. version *at the nether part of the mountain* (J. M. R.).

<sup>1</sup> The 99 titles of God, taken from the Korán, are to be found in Maracci, vol. 11, p. 414, or in Macbride's Religion of the Moham-medans, p. 121. To facilitate the repetition of these names, the Muslims use a rosary (J. M. R.).

## VII. THE PARTITION WALL 69

Him, and stand aloof from those who pervert<sup>1</sup> his titles.  
For what they have done shall they be repaid! 179.

There are ninety-nine names of God found in the Qur'án. They are repeated by pious Muslims, with the aid of a rosary, as a work of merit. The following are a few of them: The Merciful, the King, the Protector, the Victorious, the Hearer, the Provider, the Friend, the Afflicter, the Propitious, the Mild and others. Hindus have similarly the thousand names of Vishnu. God requires spiritual worship; the mere repetition of His names is of no account.

Muhammad not possessed of a jinn.

Will they not bethink them that their companion *Muhammad* is not djinn-possessed? Yes, his office is only that of plain warner. 183.

Muhammad was charged with having a devil when he went up to Mount Safá, and from thence warned against idolatry. He loved to appear at Mecca in the character of a preacher.

The coming of the 'hour' sudden.

They will ask thee of the Hour—for what time is its coming fixed? Say: The knowledge of it is only with my Lord: none shall manifest it in its time but He: it is the burden<sup>2</sup> of the Heavens and of the

<sup>1</sup> In altering the names of God, changing Allah into Allat, Elaziz into Alozza, Mennan into Menat, etc. (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, it weighs heavily on the hopes and fears of men, djinn, and angels (J. M. R.).

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Earth: not otherwise than on a sudden will it come on you. 186.

'The hour' means the last day, the day of judgement. This is said to be known only to God, and will come suddenly. The Christian doctrine is the same. Jesus Christ said: 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven' (Matt. xxiv. 36).

The idolatry of Adam and Eve.

He it is who hath created you from a single person, and from him brought forth his wife that he might dwell with her: and when he had known her, she bore a light burden, and went about with it; and when it became heavy, they both cried to God their Lord, 'If thou give us a perfect child we will surely be of the thankful.'

Yet when God had given them a perfect child, they joined partners with Him in return for what he had given them. But high is God above the partners they joined with Him! 189-190.

The legend is that when Eve was with child, Satan appeared to her and promised a safe delivery if she would call the child 'Abdu'l-Háarith or the servant of al-Háarith (Satan's name among angels) instead of 'Abdu'lláh, the servant of God, as Adam had designed. Adam agreed to this, and when the child was born it was called by that name, upon which it immediately died. This story probably arose from Cain being called a 'tiller of the ground,' which may be read in Arabic 'Abdu'l-Háarith.

# The folly of idolatry.

What! Will they join those with Him who cannot create anything, and are themselves created, and have no power to help them, or to help themselves?

And if ye summon them to 'the guidance,' they will not follow you! It is the same to them whether ye summon them or whether ye hold your peace!

Truly they whom ye call on beside God, are, like yourselves, His servants! Call on them then, and let them answer you, if what ye say of them be true!

Have they feet to walk with? Have they hands to hold with? Have they eyes to see with? Have they ears to hear with? SAY: Call on these joint gods of yours; then make your plot against me, and delay it not.

Verily, my Lord is God, who hath sent down 'the Book;' and He is the protector of the righteous.

But they whom ye call on beside Him, can lend you no help, nor can they help themselves:

And if ye summon them to 'the guidance,' they hear you not: thou seest them look towards thee, but they do not see!

Make the best of things;<sup>1</sup> and enjoin what is just, and withdraw from the ignorant:

And if stirrings to evil from Satan stir thee, fly thou for refuge to God: He verily heareth, knoweth!

Verily, they who fear God, when some phantom from Satan toucheth them, remember Him, and lo! they see clearly.

Their Brethren<sup>2</sup> will only continue them in error, and cannot preserve themselves from it. 191-201.

<sup>1</sup> *Take or use indulgence*; i.e. take men and their actions as they are, and make all due allowances. Some understand it, of Muhammad's accepting such voluntary and superfluous alms as the people could spare (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, those under Satanic influence (J. M. R.).

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The arguments are like those in the Bible (see Psalm, cxv. 3-8 and Isaiah xlv. 8-21).

• The Qur'án to be heard in silence.

And when the Koran is read, then listen ye to it and keep silence, that haply ye may obtain mercy.

And think within thine own self on God, with lowliness and with fear and without loud spoken words, at even and at morn; and be not one of the heedless.  
203-4.

This direction is said to have been given from a young Muslim repeating aloud a passage from the Qur'án during service.

### VIII. SÚRATU'L-ANFÁL (THE SPOILS)

#### *Madína*

THE title is taken from the question in the first verse concerning spoils. Most of the chapter, however, is taken up with an account of the miraculous character of the battle of Badr. Islám is now declared to have received the seal of God to its truth, and all who oppose it hereafter will merit shame and destruction, both in this world and the next.

The greater part of the chapter was written immediately after the battle of Badr, in the second year of the Flight.<sup>1</sup>

Spoils belong to God and the Prophet.

<sup>1</sup> A full account of this important battle will be found in *The battles of Badr and of Uhud* (The Islám Series, C.L.S., 4 annas).

They will question thee about THE SPOILS. SAY: The spoils are God's and the apostle's. Therefore, fear God, and settle this among yourselves; and obey God and his apostle, if you are believers. 1.

'The spoils' refer to those taken at the battle of Badr. Those who pursued the Quraish disputed with those who remained behind to guard the camp about the division of the spoil. Muhammad said that they belonged to God and his prophet.

Who are true believers, and their reward.

Believers are they only whose hearts thrill with fear when God is named, and whose faith increaseth~~er~~ at each recital of his signs, and who put their trust in their Lord;

Who observe the prayers, and give alms out of that with which we have supplied them;

These are the believers: their due grade awaiteth them in the presence of their Lord, and forgiveness, and a generous provision. 2-4.

The assistance of angels promised.

When ye sought succour of your Lord, and he answered you, 'I will verily aid you with a thousand<sup>1</sup> angels, rank on rank.' 9.

In Súratu Áli 'Imrán (iii) 120 the angels are said to have been 3,000 in number. It is explained by saying that first 1,000 angels appeared, and then 3,000.

<sup>1</sup> In Sura [xcvii.] iii. the angels are said to be 3,000 (J. M. R.).



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Muslims refreshed before the battle.

*Recollect* when sleep, a sign of security from Him, fell upon you, and he sent down upon you water from Heaven that he might thereby cleanse you, and cause the pollution of Satan to pass from you, and that he might gird up your hearts, and stablish your feet by it. 11.

Rain was interpreted as a sign of God's blessing, giving them sound sleep, water for purification, and making the sand firm so that their feet were established.

Angels commanded to destroy the Quraish.

When thy Lord spake unto the angels, 'I will be with you: therefore stablish ye the faithful. I will cast a dread into the hearts of the infidels.' Strike off their heads then, and strike off from them every finger tip. 12.

The punishment of cowards in battle.

O ye who believe! when ye meet the marshalled hosts of the infidels, turn not your backs to them:

Whoso shall turn his back to them on that day, unless he turn aside to fight, or to rally to *some other* troop, shall incur wrath from God: Hell shall be his abode and wretched the journey *thither*! 15-16.

The victory at Badr a miracle.

So it was not ye who slew them, but God slew them; and those shafts were God's, not thine!<sup>1</sup> He would

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *thou didst not cast when thou didst cast, but God cast.* This is explained of the miracle of the gravel stones and sand cast by God into the eyes of the Meccans at Badr (J. M. R.).

make trial of the faithful by a gracious trial from Himself: Verily, God Heareth, Knoweth. 17.

The Quraish are said to have been slain by the angels. It is said that Muhammad, by the direction of the angel Gabriel, took up a handful of gravel, and threw it towards the enemy, saying, 'May their faces be confounded!' on which they turned their backs and fled. Here it is said that it was God who threw it by his angel.

The idolaters at Mecca threatened.

But because they debarred *the faithful* from the holy temple, albeit they are not its guardians, nothing is there on their part why God should not chastise them. The Godfearing only are its guardians; but most of them know it not.

And their prayer at the house of God is no other than whistling through the fingers and clapping of the hands—'Taste then the torment, for that ye have been unbelievers.' 34-5.

It is said that the Quraish, the guardians of the Ka'ba, went round it, both men and women, naked, whistling, and clapping their hands. The division of spoil.

And know ye, that when ye have taken any booty, a fifth<sup>1</sup> part belongeth to God and to the Apostle, and to the near of kin, and to orphans, and to the poor,

<sup>1</sup> Before Islam it had been the custom among the Arabians to assign a fourth part of the booty to the leader of an expedition. See Frey's *Eiml.*, p. 266 (J. M. R.).

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and to the wayfarer, if ye believe in God, and in that which we have sent down to our servant on the day of the victory,<sup>1</sup> the day of the meeting of the Hosts. Over all things is God potent. 42.

One-fifth is to be divided as above; and the remaining four-fifths among those present in the battle.

Satan deserted the Quraish at Badr.

When Satan prepared their works for them, and said, 'No man shall conquer you this day; and verily I will be near to help you:' But when the two armies came in sight, he turned on his heel and said, 'Ay, I am clear of you: ay, I see what ye see not:<sup>2</sup> ay, I fear God; for God is severe in punishing.' 50.

Satan promised victory to the Quraish with his assistance; he deserted them, because he said, I see the angels which you do not.

Unbelievers the worst in the sight of God.

The worst beasts truly in the sight of God are the thankless who will not believe. 57.

This means that infidels are worse than beasts. Treachery to be met with its like.

Or if thou fear treachery from any people, throw back *their treaty* to them as thou fairly mayest,<sup>3</sup> for God loveth not the treacherous.

And think not that the infidels shall escape Us! They shall not weaken *God*. 60-1.

<sup>1</sup> That is, on the day of the battle of Badr. See Sura xxi. 49 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> The angels fighting for the Muslims (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> Thus Beidh. Or, more simply, *render them the like* (J. M. R.).

If the Muslims suspected people with whom a league had been made of treachery, they might use counter-treachery, although the verse winds up with the remark, 'God loveth not the treacherous.' The road to covenant breaking and treachery is here made easy.

Superiority of the faithful in war.

O prophet! God, and such of the faithful as follow thee, will be all-sufficient for thee.

O prophet! stir up the faithful to the fight. Twenty of you who stand firm shall vanquish two hundred: and if there be a hundred of you they shall vanquish a thousand of the infidels, for they are a people devoid of understanding.

Now hath God made your work easy, for he knoweth how weak ye are. If there be an hundred of you who endure resolutely, they shall vanquish two hundred; and if there be a thousand of you, they shall vanquish two thousand<sup>1</sup> by God's permission; for God is with those who are resolute to endure. 65-7.

As a result of the first promise that one Muslim should stand against ten infidels, one of the faithful was slain. The first promise was then abrogated, and the second given that one hundred should overcome two hundred.

Muslims reproved for taking ransom at Badr.

No prophet hath been enabled to take captives until he had made great slaughter in the earth. Ye desire the passing fruitions of this world, but God desireth the next life *for you*. And God is Mighty, Wise.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Lev. xxvi. 8; Josh. xxviii. 10 (J. M. R.).

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Had there not been a previous ordinance<sup>1</sup> from God, a severe chastisement had befallen you, for *the ransom* which ye took. 68-9.

Muḥammad here excuses himself for putting captives to death on the ground that all warrior prophets had been obliged to make a great slaughter of the infidels. The Muslims spared the lives of the captives at the battle of Badr, because they desired the ransom-money. They would have suffered severe punishment if it had not been allowed by a previous revelation.

### IX. SÚRATU'T-TAUBA

(REPENTANCE, IMMUNITY)

*Madína*

THIS chapter is the only one which has not 'In the name of God', prefixed. Some say that Muḥammad, who died shortly after, had not given directions about it. Others assert that it arises from having originally formed part of the preceding chapter. The title 'immunity' is taken from the 1st verse. The spirit of the whole chapter is a call to repentance to those who declined to accompany Muḥammad in his expedition to Tabúq.

The chapter is supposed to have been written a year before Muḥammad's death.

Idolaters to be slain unless they embrace Islám.

<sup>1</sup> Authorizing the ransom of captives (J. M. R.).

## IX. REPENTANCE, IMMUNITY .79

And when the sacred months<sup>1</sup> are passed, kill those who join other gods with God wherever ye shall find them; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush: but if they shall convert, and observe prayer, and pay the obligatory alms, then let them go their way, for God is Gracious, Merciful. 5.

The Arabs had four sacred months during which war was unlawful. They were the first, seventh, eleventh, and twelfth of the year. When they were over idolaters might be killed wherever they were found, unless they accepted Islām and observed its commands.

Who alone may visit temples.

It is not for the votaries of other gods with God, witnesses against themselves of infidelity, to visit the temples of God. These! vain their works: and in the fire shall they abide for ever!

He only should visit the temples of God who believeth in God and the last day, and observeth prayer, and payeth the legal alms, and dreadeth none but God. These haply will be among the rightly guided. 17-8.

Giving drink to pilgrims, and the Hājj insufficient.

Do ye place the giving drink to the pilgrims, and the visitation of the sacred temple,<sup>2</sup> on the same level

<sup>1</sup> Shawāl, Dhu'lkaada, Dhu'lhajja, Muharram. These months were observed by the Arabians previous to the time of Muhammad (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Al Abbas, Muhammad's uncle, when taken prisoner, had defended his unbelief, and declared that he had performed these two important duties. Beidh (J. M. R.).

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with him who believeth in God and the last day, and fighteth on the way of God? They shall not be held equal by God: and God guideth not the unrighteous.  
19.

The victory of Hunain due to God's help.

Now hath God helped you in many battle-fields, and, on the day of Honein,<sup>1</sup> when ye prided yourselves on your numbers; but it availed you nothing; and the earth, with all its breadth, became too straight for you: <sup>2</sup> then turned ye your backs in flight.

Then did God send down His spirit of repose upon His Apostle, and upon the faithful, and He sent down the hosts which ye saw not, and he punished the Infidels: This, the Infidels' reward! 25-6.

This battle was fought in the valley of Hunain, about three miles from Mecca. Muhammad had an army of 12,000, while the enemy did not exceed 4,000. Muslims, seeing themselves so numerous, made sure of the victory; but at the first encounter they were put to flight. They were rallied, and Muhammad, casting at the enemy a handful of gravel, said: 'May their faces be covered with confusion, fear come into their hearts, may they flee.' The gravel is alleged to have been thrown under divine guidance: 'and thou didst not cast

<sup>1</sup> At the battle of Honein, a valley three miles from Mecca (A.H. 8) the Muhammadans, presuming upon the great superiority of their numbers, 12,000 men, over the enemy who were only 4,000 strong, were seized with a panic throughout their ranks. Order was restored and victory obtained through the bravery and presence of mind of Muhammad and his kindred (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> The enemy attacked and routed you on all sides (J. M. R.).

the gravel, but God cast it that He might prove the believers.' *Súratu'l-Anfál* (viii) 16.<sup>2</sup> Assisted by unseen angels, the Muslims gained the victory. The 'spirit of repose' denotes the emblem of the divine presence. The original word is *Sakínat* or *Shechinah*.<sup>3</sup>

Jews and Christians, as well as idolaters, to be attacked.

Make war upon such of those to whom the Scriptures have been given as believe not in God, or in the last day, and who forbid not that which God and His Apostle have forbidden, and who profess not the profession of the truth, until they pay tribute out of hand,<sup>3</sup> and they be humbled.<sup>4</sup> 29.

Jews and Christians were to be allowed to live on payment of tribute.

Jews and Christians reproved for using the epithet 'the Son of God.'

The Jews say, 'Ezra (Ozair) is a son of God';<sup>5</sup> and the Christians say, 'The Messiah is a son of God'.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Battles of Badr and of Uhud* (C.L.S.), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> For a critical study of this word, see *The Historical Development of the Qur'an* (3rd Ed.), p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> Or, *by right of subjection*, Sale, *in cash*, Wall; *all without exception*, K. i.e. as if by counting hands (J. M. R.).

<sup>4</sup> Thus *Hilchoth Melachim*, vi. 4. The Jews are commanded, in case of war with the Gentiles, to offer peace on two conditions:—that they become tributaries, and renounce idolatry. Thus also chap. viii. 4 (J. M. R.).

<sup>5</sup> The Muhammadan tradition is that Ezra was raised to life after he had been 100 years dead, and dictated from memory the whole Jewish law, which had been lost during the captivity, to the scribes. That the Jews regarded Ezra as a son of God is due to Muhammad's own invention (J. M. R.).



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Such the sayings in their mouths! They resemble the saying of the Infidels of old! God do battle with them! How are they misguided! 30.

Ezra was a priest who went from Babylon to Jerusalem after the captivity, and became a leader of the Jews. It is not true that they called Ezra the son of God. Christians acknowledge Christ to be the Son of God, although not born in the ordinary way. 'God do battle with them', expresses the latest opinion of the Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

Infidels may be attacked in sacred months.

Twelve months is the number of months with God,<sup>2</sup> according to God's book, *since* the day when He created the Heavens and the Earth: of these four are sacred: this is the right usage: But wrong not yourselves therein; attack those who join gods with God in all, as they attack you in all: and know that God is with those who fear him. 36.

Muslims exhorted to fight, since God assisted Muhammad in the cave.

O Believers! what possessed you, that when it was said to you, 'March forth on the Way of God,' ye sank heavily earthwards? What! prefer ye the life of this world to the next? But the fruition of this mundane life, in respect of that which is to come, is but little.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the views of Muslim commentators on these words, see *The Historical Development of the Qur'án* (3rd Ed.), p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> The intercalation of a month every third year, in order to reduce the lunar to the solar years, is justified by the Muhammadans from this passage (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> See Sur. xiii. 26, p. 336 (n.) (J. M. R.).

Unless ye march forth, with a grievous chastisement will He chastise you; and He will place another people in your stead, and ye shall in no way harm Him: for over everything is God potent. 38-9.

The Muslims set out with great unwillingness in the expedition of Tabúq, a town about half way between Madína and Damascus, as it was in the midst of the summer heats. The soldiers suffered so much that it was called the distressed army. Besides, their fruits were just ripe, and they would rather have stayed to gather them. Punishment is threatened for disobedience. If they did not assist, God would assist as he did when Muḥammad and Abú Bakr were hiding in a cave near Mecca. Then, when Abú Bakr grieved, Muḥammad comforted him by saying, 'God is with us.' Muḥammad was assisted by angels, unseen by the Muslims.

The sure reward of the faithful.

SAY: Nothing can befall us but what God hath destined<sup>1</sup> for us. Our liege-lord is He; and on God let the faithful trust!

SAY: Await ye for us, other than one of the two best things?<sup>2</sup> But we await for you the infliction of a chastisement by God, from himself, or at our hands. Wait ye then; we verily will wait with you. 51-2.

Nothing would happen except what God had written. The 'two most excellent things' were

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *written* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, victory or martyrdom (J. M. R.).

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victory in battle or admission into heaven as martyrs.

How alms are to be distributed.

But alms are only *to be given* to the poor and the needy, and those who collect them, and to those<sup>1</sup> whose hearts are won *to Islam*, and for ransoms, and for debtors, and for the cause of God, and the wayfarer. This is an ordinance from God: and God is Knowing, Wise. 60.

The unwise distribution of alms in India is a great evil. Able-bodied men are often encouraged to live in idleness and vice. So far from being meritorious, it is a sin.

The faithful and their rewards.

The faithful of both sexes are mutual friends: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil; they observe prayer, and pay the legal impost, and they obey God and His Apostle. On these will God have mercy: verily, God is Mighty, Wise.

To the faithful, both men and women, God promiseth gardens 'neath which the rivers flow, in which they shall abide, and goodly mansions in the gardens of Eden. But best of all will be God's good pleasure in them. This will be the great bliss. 72-3.

War to be urged against unbelievers and hypocrites.

O Prophet! contend against the infidels and the hypocrites, and be rigorous with them: Hell shall be their dwelling place! Wretched the journey thither! 74.

<sup>1</sup> The petty Arab chiefs with whom Muhammad made terms after the battle of Honein, in order to secure their followers (J. M. R.). See also *The Faith of Islam*, p. 330.

This was, it is alleged, by the immediate command of God. The three alternatives offered were conversion, tribute, death.

Who may remain at home during war.

It shall be no crime ~~to~~ the weak, and in the sick, and in those who find not the means of contributing, to stay at home, provided they are sincere with God and His Apostle. Against those who act virtuously, there is no cause of blame: and God is Gracious, Merciful:—

Nor against those, to whom when they came to thee that thou shouldst mount them, thou didst say ‘I find not wherewith to mount you,’ and they turned away their eyes shedding floods of tears for grief, because they found no means to contribute.

Only is there cause of blame against those who, though they are rich, ask thee for exemption. They are pleased to be with those who stay behind; and God hath set a seal upon their hearts: they have no knowledge. 92-5.

The tradition is that seven men asked Muhammad for some old boots as they could not march without them in the hot season. As they could not be supplied, they went away crying. Hence they are honoured as *The Weepers*.

An opposition Mosque denounced.

There are some<sup>1</sup> who have built a Mosque for mischief and for infidelity, and to disunite the faithful, and

<sup>1</sup> The tribe of Beni Ganim had built a mosque, professedly from religious motives, which they invited Muhammad on his way to Tabouk to dedicate by a solemn act of prayer. Muhammad, however, discovered that the real motive of the Beni Ganim was jealousy of the tribe of Beni Amru Ibn Auf, and of the mosque at

in expectation of him<sup>1</sup> who, in time past, warred against God and His Apostle. They will surely swear, 'Our aim was only good:' but God is witness that they are liars.

Never set thou foot in it. There is a Mosque<sup>2</sup> founded from its first day in piety. More worthy is it that thou enter therein: therein are men who aspire to purity, and God loveth the purified. 108-9.

The Mosque of Kuba, about two miles from Madína, the foundation stone of which was laid by Muḥammad four days before he entered Madína on his flight from Mecca, was the first place of public prayer in Islám. Some rich men built another mosque at the instigation of Abú Hamíl, a monk who was opposed to Muḥammad, and wished him to consecrate it.

True believers are sold to God.

Verily, of the faithful hath God bought their persons and their substance, on condition of Paradise for them *in return*: on the path of God shall they fight, and slay, and be slain: a promise for this is pledged in the Law, and in the Evangel, and in the Koran—and

Kuba, and that there existed an understanding between them and his enemy the monk Abu Amir, who was then in Syria, for the purpose of urging the Greeks to attack the Muslims and their mosque (J. M. R.).

<sup>1</sup> Abu Amir (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> The mosque of Kuba, about three miles S.S.E. of Medina. The spot where this verse was revealed is still pointed out, and called 'Makam el Ayat,' or 'the place of signs.' Burton's 'Pilgrimage,' ii., p. 214. Muhammad laid the first brick, and it was the first place of public prayer in El Islam. *Ib.* p. 209 (J. M. R.).

who more faithful to his engagement than God? Rejoice, therefore, in the contract that ye have contracted: for this shall be the great bliss. 112.

God is here said to promise paradise to those who fight for the cause of God whatever may have been their character. Can such a doctrine be accepted as true?

Muslims not to pray for idolatrous relatives after death.

It is not for the prophet or the faithful to pray for the forgiveness of those, even though they be of kin, who associate other beings with God, after it hath been made clear to them that they are to be the inmates of Hell. 114.

It is lawful to pray for unbelievers before their death, but not after it. Prayers may be offered for departed friends, if they are Muslims. This makes a profitable business for the Muslim priests.

## X. SÚRATU YÚNAS (JONAH)

### *Mecca*

THIS chapter is so called on account of the mention of the prophet Jonah in verse ninety-eight. Muḥammad's familiarity with Jewish history and traditions shows that he had Jews among his friends and acquaintances. The chapter is largely addressed to the unbelieving Quraish. It is supposed to have been delivered not long before the flight.

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The Meccans accuse Muḥammad of sorcery.

ELIF. LAM. RA.<sup>1</sup> These are the signs of the wise Book!

A matter of wonderment is it to the men of *Mecca*, that to a person among themselves We revealed, 'Bear warnings to the people: and, to those who believe, bear the good tidings that they shall have with their Lord the precedence merited by *their* sincerity.' The unbelievers say, 'Verily this is a manifest sorcerer.' 2.

A prophet has no honour in his own country. The Quraish despised Muḥammad as one of themselves, and only the orphan pupil of Abú Tálíb. Prayer and salutation in paradise.

Their cry therein, 'Glory be to thee, O God!' and their salutation therein, 'Peace!'

And the close of their cry, 'Praise be to God, Lord of all creatures!' 10-11.

The salutation is either that of the blessed to one another, or that of the angels to the blessed. The Quraish ask for a different Qur'án.

But when our clear signs are recited to them, they who look not forward to meet Us, say, 'Bring a different Koran from this, or make some change in it.' SAY: It is not for me to change it as mine own soul prompteth. I follow only what is revealed to me: verily, I fear, if I rebel against my Lord, the punishment of a great day. 16.

The Quraish wished a message of mercy instead of threatenings. Muḥammad declared that

<sup>1</sup> See Sura lxxviii. n. 3, p. 32 (J. M. R.).

he could not change it. The abrogations were made by God.

A sign demanded from Muhammad.

They say: 'Unless a sign be sent down to him from his Lord . . .' But ~~say~~ The hidden is only with God: wait therefore: I truly will be with you among those who wait. 21.

This shows that as yet Muhammad had not wrought any miracle, but from saying 'wait,' he seems to have expected to receive the power to do so.

Unbelievers remember God in distress, but forget Him when delivered.

He it is who enableth you to travel by land and sea, so that ye go on board of ships—which sail on with them, with favouring breeze in which they rejoice. But if a tempestuous gale overtake them, and the billow come on them from every side, and they think that they are encompassed therewith, they call on God, professing sincere religion: — 'Wouldst thou but rescue us from this, then will we indeed be of the thankful.'

But when we have rescued them, lo! they commit unrighteous excesses on the earth! O men! assuredly your self-injuring excess is only an enjoyment of this life present: soon ye return to us: and we will let you know what ye have done! 23-4.

In time of danger unbelievers neglect their idols and call upon God alone; but when delivered, they act proudly and wickedly.



## 90 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Idolaters will be deserted of their gods on the judgment day.

And on that day will we gather them all together: then will we say to those who added gods to God, 'To your place, ye and those added gods of yours!' Then we will separate between~~ed~~ them: and those their gods shall say, 'Ye served us not: 1

And God is a sufficient witness between us and you: we cared not aught for your worship.'

There shall every soul make proof of what itself shall have sent on before, and they shall be brought back to God, their true lord, and the deities of their own devising shall vanish from them. 29-31.

The Muslims believe that God will, at the last day, enable the idols to speak, and that they will thus reproach their worshippers, instead of interceding for them.

Idolaters should worship their Creator and Preserver.

Say: Who supplieth you from the Heaven and the Earth? Who hath power over hearing and sight? And who bringeth forth the living from the dead, and bringeth forth the dead from the living? And who ruleth all things? They will surely say, 'God: ' then say: 'What! will ye not therefore fear him?'

This God then is your true Lord: and when the truth is gone, what remaineth but error? How then are ye so perverted?

Thus is the word of thy Lord made good on the wicked, that they shall not believe.

<sup>1</sup> *But rather your own lusts.* The Muhammadans believe that idols will be gifted with speech at the day of judgment (J. M. R.).

SAY: Is there any of the gods whom ye add to God who produceth a creature, then causeth it to return to him? SAY: God produceth a creature, then causeth it to return to Him: How therefore are ye turned aside? 32-5.

The folly is shown of those who worship inferior deities, while regarding God as the source of all their blessings.

The Qur'án could have been composed only by God.

Moreover this Koran could not have been devised by any but God: but it confirmeth what was revealed before it, and is a clearing up of the Scriptures—there is no doubt thereof—from the Lord of all creatures.

Do they say, 'He hath devised it himself?' SAY: Then bring a Sura like it; and call on whom ye can beside God, if ye speak truth. 38-9.

No reason is given why none other but God could have composed the Qur'án. The only proof that it was not forged by Muḥammad is to bring a chapter like it. Authors naturally think highly of their own productions: other people believe that there are writings much superior to the Qur'án.

The Prophet charged with imposture.

But that which they embrace not in their knowledge have they charged with falsehood, though the explanation of it had not yet been given them. So those who were before them brought charges of imposture: But see what was the end of the unjust! 40.

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Muhammad compares himself to the former prophets, who were, like himself, charged with imposture.

An apostle sent to every nation.

And every people hath had its apostle. And when their apostle came, a rightful decision took place between them, and they were not wronged. 48.

*This idea was borrowed from the Jews. It is not true, but God will deal justly with all.*

God's omnipresence.

Thou shalt not be employed in affairs, nor shalt thou read a text out of the Koran, nor shall ye work any work, but we will be witnesses over you when ye are engaged therein: and not the weight of an atom on Earth or in Heaven escapeth thy Lord; nor is there aught that is less than this or greater, but it is in the perspicuous Book. 62.

The 'perspicuous book' is that wherein God's decrees are recorded.

Moses accused of sorcery by the Egyptians.

Then sent we, after them, Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his nobles with our signs; but they acted proudly and were a wicked people:

And when the truth came to them from us, they said, Verily, this is clear sorcery.'

Moses said: 'What! say ye of the truth after it hath come to you, "Is this sorcery?" But sorcerers shall not prosper.'

They said: 'Art thou come to us to pervert us from the faith in which we found our fathers, and that you twain shall bear rule in this land? But we believe you not.' 76-9.

The Bible nowhere says that Moses and Aaron were sent for the conversion of the Egyptians to the true faith.

Pharaoh's body raised from the sea.

And we led the children of Israel through the sea; and Pharaoh and his hosts followed them in eager and hostile sort until, when ~~the~~ drowning overtook him, he said, 'I believe that there is no God but he on whom the children of Israel believe, and I am one of the Muslims.'

'Yes, now,' said God: 'but thou hast been rebellious hitherto, and wast one of the wicked doers.'

But this day will we rescue thee with thy body that thou mayest be a sign to those who shall be after thee:<sup>1</sup> but truly, most men are of our signs regardless!' 90-2.

Pharaoh, when drowning, is said to have confessed himself a Muslim, but Gabriel, it is said, stopped his mouth with mud, reproaching him in the words which follow. As some of the Israelites doubted whether Pharaoh was really drowned, the legend is that Gabriel, by God's command, caused his body to swim that they might see it.

<sup>1</sup> This is in accordance with Talmudic legend. 'Recognize the power of repentance, in the case of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, who rebelled excessively against the most High; *Who is God that I should hearken to his voice?* (Ex. v. 2). But with the same tongue that sinned he did penance: *Who is like thee, O Lord, among the Gods?* (xv. 11). The Holy One, Blessed be He, delivered him from the dead, . . . so that he should not die (ix. 15, 16).—For now have I stretched forth my hand, and verily thee have I raised up from among the dead, to proclaim my might.' Ex. ix. 15, 16. A strange comment! Pirke R. Eliezer, § 43, Comp. Midr. on Ps. cvi. Midr. Jalkut, ch. 238 (J. M. R.).

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### An appeal made to the Scriptures.

And if thou art in doubt as to what we have sent down to thee, inquire at those who have read the Scriptures before thee.<sup>1</sup> Now hath the truth come unto thee from thy Lord: be not therefore of those who doubt. 84.

For a full account, see the book of Jonah in the Old Testament.

The repentance of Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah.

Were it otherwise, any city, had it believed, might have found its safety in its faith. But it was so, only with the people of JONAS. When they believed, we delivered them from the penalty of shame in this world, and provided for them for a time. 88.

This shows that the Scriptures were correct in the days of Muḥammad.

God's permission necessary to belief.

No soul can believe but by the permission of God: and he shall lay his wrath on those who will not understand. 100.

## XI. SÚRATU HÚD

### *Mecca*

THE chapter is probably so called from the mention of Húd. The Quraish had rejected Muḥammad as an imposter, and the Qur'án as a forgery.

<sup>1</sup> That is, whether thou art not foretold in the Law and Gospel, and whether the Koran is not in unison with, and confirmatory of, them (J. M. R.).

Muḥammad gives an account of several prophets who were sent to reclaim the people from idolatry. Like himself, they were all charged with imposture. Such conduct was always followed by divine punishment. The chapter was designated by Muḥammad as one of the 'terrific Sūras.' It is supposed to have been written at Mecca when the opposition was very fierce. As this Sūra is very much a repetition of the seventh quotations will be few.

Muḥammad charged with forging the Qur'ān.

If they shall say, '*The Koran* is his own device,' SAY: Then bring ten Suras like it<sup>1</sup> of your devising, and call whom ye can to your aid beside God, if ye are men of truth.

But if they answer you not, then know that it hath been sent down to you in the wisdom of God only, and that there is no God but He. Are ye then Muslims? 16-7.

Noah charged with Imposture.

We sent Noah of old unto his people: 'Verily I come to you a plain admonisher,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. verse 37 and Sura [xci.] ii. 21. It should be observed that the challenge in these passages is not to produce a book which shall equal the Koran in point of poetry or rhetoric, but in the importance of its subject-matter, with reference to the Divine Unity, the future retribution, etc. Upon these topics Muhammad well knew that he had preoccupied the ground. And we may infer from the fragments of the Revelations of Musailima and Sajjah (Hisam. 946; Attabāri (ed. Kosegarten) i. 134, 136, 152; Tab. Agāni, 339), which are mere imitations of the Koran, that he felt this to be the case (J. M. R.).

## 96. SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

That ye worship none but God. Verily I fear for you the punishment of a grievous day.'

Then said the chiefs of his people who believed not, 'We see in thee but a man like ourselves; and we see not who have followed thee except our meanest ones of hasty judgment, nor see we any excellence in you above ourselves: nay, we deem you liars.' 27-9.

A son of Noah refuses to enter the Ark, and is drowned.

And the Ark moved on with them amid waves like mountains: and Noah called to his son—for he was apart—'Embark with us, O my child! and be not with the unbelievers.'

He said, 'I will betake me to a mountain that shall secure me from the water.' He said, 'None shall be secure this day from the decree of God, save him on whom He shall have mercy.' And a wave passed between them, and he was among the drowned. 4-5.

This is a fable. No son of Noah was drowned. See Genesis vii. 13.

Húd rejected.

And unto Ad *we sent* their Brother HOUD. He said, 'O my people, worship God. You have no God beside Him. Ye only devise a lie.

They said, 'O Houd, thou hast not brought us proofs of *thy mission*: we will not abandon our gods at thy word, and we believe thee not.

We can only say that some of our gods have smitten thee with evil.' Said he, 'Now take I God to witness, and do ye also witness, that I am clear of your joining other gods. 52, 56-7.

Ṣálih rejected.

And unto Themoud we sent their Brother Saleh: 'O my people! *said he*, worship God: you have no other god than Him. He hath raised you up out of the earth, and hath given you to dwell therein. Ask pardon of him then, and be turned unto him; for thy Lord is nigh, ready to answer.'

They said, 'O Saleh! our hopes were fixed on thee till now:<sup>1</sup> forbiddest thou us to worship what our fathers worshipped? Truly we misdoubt the *faith* to which thou callest us, as suspicious.' 64-5.

Isaac Jacob's brother.

His wife was standing by and laughed; and we announced Isaac to her; and after Isaac, Jacob. 74.

Muḥammad says that God promised Sarah to have Jacob as a son after Isaac, whereas Jacob was a son of Isaac. See Genesis xxv. 26.

Shu'aib rejected and the punishment which followed.

And we sent to Madian their brother Shoaib. He said, 'O my people! worship God: no other God have you than He: give not short weight and measure: I see indeed that ye revel in good things; but I fear for you the punishment of the all-encompassing day.

O my people! give weight and measure with fairness; purloin not *other* men's goods; and perpetrate not injustice on the earth with corrupt practices:

They said to him, 'O Shoaib! is it thy prayers which enjoin that we should leave what our fathers

<sup>1</sup> That is, we had intended to make thee our chief. Beidh (J. M. R.).



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worshipped, or that we should not do with our substance as pleaseth us? Thou forsooth art the mild, the right director!'

*He said, 'O my people! How think ye? If I have a clear revelation from my Lord, and if from Himself He hath supplied me with goodly supplies, and if I will not follow you in that which I myself forbid you, do I seek aught but your amendment so far as in me lieth? My sole help is in God. In Him do I trust, and to Him do I turn me.*

*They said, 'O Shoaib! we understand not much of what thou sayest, and we clearly see that thou art powerless among us: were it not for thy family we would have surely stoned thee, nor couldst thou have prevailed against us.'*

*And when our decree came to pass, we delivered Shoaib and his companions in faith, by our mercy: And a violent tempest overtook the wicked, and in the morning they were found prostrate in their houses. 85-6; 89-90; 93, 97.*

### The fate of Pharaoh and his princes.

*Of old sent we Moses with our signs and with incontestable power to Pharaoh, and to his nobles—who followed the behests of Pharaoh, and, unrighteous were Pharaoh's behests.*

*He shall head his people on the day of the Resurrection and cause them to descend into the fire: and wretched the descent by which they shall descend! 99-100.*

### The foregoing histories related as a warning.

*And all that we have related to thee of the histories of these Apostles, is to confirm thy heart thereby. By these hath the truth reached thee, and a monition and warning to those who believe. 121.*

If the Quraish rejected Muḥammad<sup>1</sup>, they would perish like those who disbelieved other prophets.

## XII. SÚRATU YÚSUF (JOSEPH)

### *Mecca*

THIS chapter differs from other chapters of the Qur'án in having only one subject, the history of Joseph.<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad received it from persons unacquainted with the true history. The order is often wrong, besides incorrect additions and changes, yet Muḥammad professed that it had been revealed to him by God. For the true history see Genesis xxxvii—1. Only a few of the erroneous passages will be quoted.

Why the Qur'án was given in Arabic.

ELIF. LAM. RA. These are signs of the clear Book.

An Arabic Koran have we sent it down, that ye might understand it. 1-2.

The story of Joseph revealed by God to Muḥammad.

In revealing to thee this Koran,<sup>2</sup> one of the most beautiful of narratives will we narrate to thee, of which thou hast hitherto been regardless. 3.

<sup>1</sup> In no other Sura beside this is one subject treated of throughout. It was recited to the first eight of the Ansars who were converted, and clearly proves that Muhammad must have been in confidential intercourse with learned Jews (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> The word Koran is here used in the same sense as Sura (J. M. R.).

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Muhammad was unacquainted with this most excellent history before it was revealed to him by God.

Jacob tells Joseph not to make known his dreams.

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When Joseph said to his Father, 'O my Father! verily I beheld eleven stars and the sun and the moon—beheld them make obeisance to me!'<sup>1</sup>

He said, 'O my son! tell not thy vision to thy brethren, lest they plot a plot against thee: for Satan is the manifest foe of man. 4-5.

This contradicts the Bible, where it is said that Joseph told his dreams. Gen. xxxvii. 5, 10. Joseph's brethren beg their father to send him.

They said, 'O our Father! why dost thou not entrust us with Joseph? indeed we mean him well.

Send him with us to-morrow that he may enjoy himself and sport: we will surely keep him safely.'

He said, 'Verily, your taking him away will grieve me and I fear lest while ye are heedless of him the wolf devour him.'

They said, 'Surely if the wolf devour him, and we so many, we must in that case be weak indeed. 11-14.

The Bible says that Jacob sent Joseph of his own accord, and that he sent him not *with* his brothers, but *in search of them* to bring news of his sons and the flocks. Gen. xxxvii. 12, 13.

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad was either unaware of the previous dream mentioned, Gen. xxxvii. 7, or passes it by in silence (J. M. R.).

Joseph put into a well, but reported to have been destroyed by a wolf.

And when they went away with him they agreed to place him at the bottom of the well. And We revealed to him, 'Thou wilt yet tell them of this their deed, when they shall not know thee.'

And they came at nightfall to their father weeping.

They said, 'O our father! of a truth, we went to run races, and we left Joseph with our clothes, and the wolf devoured him: but thou wilt not believe us even though we speak the truth.'

And they brought his shirt with false blood upon it. He said, 'Nay, but yourselves have managed this affair.<sup>1</sup> But patience is seemly: and the help of God is to be implored that I may bear what you tell me.' 15-18.

The Bible says nothing about running races. The brothers sent Joseph's coat dipped in blood to their father, simply saying, that they had found it, and asking whether it was Joseph's coat. Instead of the answer in the Qur'án, Jacob said, 'Without doubt Joseph is rent in pieces.' Gen. xxxvii. 33.

Joseph said to have been found by travellers.

And wayfarers came and sent their drawer of water,<sup>2</sup> and he let down his bucket. 'Good news!'<sup>3</sup> said he,

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *your minds have made a thing seem pleasant to you* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> According to Gen. xxxvii. 24, the well or pit had 'no water in it' (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> Some take the Arabic Boshra as the proper name of the person who accompanied the drawer of water (J. M. R.).

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'This is a youth!' And they kept his case secret, to make merchandise of him. But God knew what they did.

And they sold him for a paltry price—for some dirhems counted down, and at no high rate did they value him. 19-20.

It is said that when the travellers let down a bucket to draw water, Joseph seized it, and was drawn up. The Bible says that Joseph was sold by his brethren, and that the well was dry. Gen. xxxvii. 24, 28. .

Jacob's sight restored by Joseph's inner garment.

Go ye with this my shirt and throw it on my father's face, and he shall recover his sight: and bring me all your family.'

And when the caravan was departed, their father said, 'I surely perceive the smell of Joseph: <sup>1</sup> think ye that I dote?'

They said, 'By God, it is thy old mistake.'

And when the bearer of good tidings came, he cast it on his face, and Jacob's eyesight returned. 93-6.

The Muslim legend is that, that the inner garment was given by Gabriel to Joseph, when in the well. It retained the smell of heaven, and could be perceived at a long distance.

The Qur'án no forgery.

Certainly in their histories is an example for men of understanding. This is no new tale of fiction, but a

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Gen xxvii. 27 (J. M. R.).

confirmation of previous scriptures, and an explanation of all things, and guidance and mercy to those who believe. 111.

The Qur'án professes only to confirm the scriptures previously revealed; but it often does the opposite.

### XIII. SÚRATU'R-RA'D (THUNDER)

#### *Mecca*

THE name of this chapter occurs in verse fourteen. It might be called the 'Chapter of Apologies', on account of Muḥammad's failure to perform the miracles demanded by the unbelievers.'

Unbelievers demand a sign.

And they who believe not say: 'If a sign from his Lord be not sent down to him. . .!' Thou art a warner only. And every people hath its guide. 9.

Jesus Christ, by His wonderful works, shewed that He had come from God: Muḥammad wrought no miracles: he professed only to be a preacher.

Recording angels are ever present.

Each hath a succession of *Angels* before him and behind him, who watch over him by God's behest. 12.

Muslims believe that two guardian angels attend on every man to write down his actions. They are called the *Mua'qqibát*, i.e., 'those who succeed one another'. They are also called *Kiráman*,

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Katibín, or 'Illustrious recorders'. (Súra lxxxii, 10). For further details see *Faith of Islám*, pp. 228-9.

Thunder praises God.

And the THUNDER uttereth his praise, and the Angels also, for awe of Him: and he sendeth his bolts and smiteth with them whom he will<sup>1</sup> while they are wrangling about God! Mighty is he in prowess. 14.

Signs unavailing to make true believers.

If there were a Koran by which the mountains could be set in motion, or the earth cleft, or the dead be made to speak. . . . But all sovereignty is in the hands of God. Do then believers doubt<sup>2</sup> that had He pleased God would certainly have guided all men aright? 30.

These were miracles which the Quraish demanded of Muhammad. They asked that some of their ancestors might be raised to bear witness of him.

Prophets may have wives and children.

Apostles truly have we already sent before thee, and wives and offspring have we given them. Yet no apostle had come with miracles unless by the leave of God. To each age its Book. 38.

<sup>1</sup> This is said by the traditionists and commentators generally, to refer to Amir and Arbad ben Kais, who in the year nine or ten conspired against Muhammad's life, and were struck dead by lightning. See the authorities in Nöld., p. 120: Weil, 256; Caussin, iii. 295. But this explanation may have been suggested by the words of the text, which must, if the comment be correct, have been revealed at Medina (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *despair* (J. M. R.).

This passage was revealed in answer to the reproaches which were cast on Muḥammad, on account of the great number of his wives.

Every age hath its book.

What He pleaseth will God abrogate or confirm: for with Him is the source of revelation. 39.

The Muslims believe that God gave written revelations not only to Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad, but to several prophets, although they are now lost.

#### XIV. SŪRATU IBRĀHĪM (ABRAHIM)

##### *Mecca*

THE chapter is so called from its mention of Abraham, verse thirty-eight. In it the unbelieving Quraish are warned by the example of those who rejected the former prophets.

Object of the Qur'án.

ELIF. LAM. RA. This book have we sent down to thee that by their Lord's permission thou mayest bring men out of darkness into light, into the path of the Mighty, the Glorious. 1.

Apostles use the language of their people.

And in order that He might speak plainly to them, we have not sent any Apostle, save with the speech of his own people; but God misleadeth whom He will, and whom He will he guideth: and He is the Mighty, the Wise. 4.



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On this principle the Qur'án should be translated, and people should pray in a language which they understand.

Former apostles rejected in spite of their miracles.

Hath not the story reached you of those who were before you, the people of Noah, and Ad, and Themoud, And of those who lived after them? None knoweth them but God. When their prophets came to them with proofs of their mission, they put their hands on their mouths and said, 'In sooth, we believe not your message; and in sooth, of that to which you bid us, we are in doubt, as of a thing suspicious.'

Their prophets said: 'Is there any doubt concerning God, maker of the Heavens and of the Earth, who calleth you that He may pardon your sins, and respite you until an appointed time?'

They said, 'Ye are but men like us: fain would ye turn us from our fathers' worship. Bring us therefore some clear proof.' 9-12.

### The punishment of an unbeliever.

Hell is before him: and of tainted water shall he be made to drink:

He shall sup it and scarce swallow it for loathing; and Death shall assail him on every side, but he shall not die: and before him shall be seen a grievous torment. 19-20.

The torments of hell and the pleasures of heaven are by the Muslims supposed to be bodily. Idolatrous leaders at the day of Judgement.

All mankind shall come forth before God; and the weak shall say to the men of might, 'Verily, we were

your followers: will ye not then relieve us of some part of the vengeance of God?’

They shall say, ‘If God had guided us, we surely had guided you. It is now all one whether we be impatient, or endure with patience. We have no escape.’ 24-5.

The simple people will thus speak to their leaders who seduced them to idolatry. The reply is that if God had not allowed them to fall into error, they would not have seduced them.

Satan will desert idolaters in hell.

And after doom hath been given, Satan shall say, ‘Verily, God promised you a promise of truth: I, too, made you a promise, but I deceived you. Yet I had no power over you:

But I only called you and ye answered me. Blame not me then, but blame yourselves: I cannot aid you, neither can ye aid me. I never believed that I was His equal with whom ye joined me.’ As for the evil doers, a grievous torment doth await them. 26-7.

Satan will tell them not to lay the blame on his temptations, but on their own folly in listening to him. He had no power to compel them to sin.

## XV. SÚRATU’L-ḤIJR (AL-ḤIJR)

### *Mecca*

THIS chapter differs little from the two preceding. As usual, the Quraish are warned against idolatry.

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Al-Hijr was the land inhabited by the tribe of Thamúd.

Every nation has its day of grace.

We never destroyed a city whose term was not per-  
fixed:<sup>1</sup>

No people can forestall or retard its destiny. 4-5.

Everything is supposed to be decreed by God.  
Muḥammad accused of being possessed by a  
devil.

They say! 'O thou to whom the warning hath been  
sent down, thou art surely possessed by a djinn:

Wouldst thou not have come to us with the angels,  
if thou wert of those who assert the truth?' 6-7.

Jinn, the word used, is translated devil. This  
idea may have been suggested by the fits to which  
Muḥammad was subject. Angels were not sent  
except on important occasions, and chiefly to  
execute judgement.

All prophets laughed to scorn.

And already have We sent Apostles, before thee,  
among the sects of the ancients;

But never came Apostles to them whom they did not  
deride.

In like manner will We put it into the hearts of the  
sinners of Mecca to do the same:

They will not believe on him though the example of  
those of old hath gone before. 10-13.

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *which had not a known writing* (J. M. R.).

Muhammad was scoffed at like all the other prophets. God is said to have put it into the hearts of the Meccans to ridicule Muhammad.

How devils are driven away.

We have set the signs of the zodiac in the Heavens,  
and adorned and decked them forth for the beholders,  
And We guard them from every stoned Satan. 13-17.

Muslims suppose that the devils try to climb to the constellations to find out what is going on in heaven. They are supposed to be driven away by stones. When a star seems to shoot through the sky, Muslims suppose that the angels who keep guard at the constellations, dart them at devils who come too near.

Iblis, or Satan, refuses to worship man on his creation.

We created man of dried clay, of dark loam moulded ;  
And the djinn had We before created of subtle fire.

*Remember* when thy Lord said to the Angels, 'I create man of dried clay, of dark loam moulded :

And when I shall have fashioned him and breathed of my spirit into him, then fall ye down and worship him.'

And the Angels bowed down in worship, all of them, all together,

Save Eblis : he refused to be with those who bowed in worship.

'O Eblis,'<sup>1</sup> said God, 'wherefore art thou not with those who bow down in worship?'

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Sura [xci.] ii. 32. There is much in this dialogue between Eblis and Allah which reminds of the dialogue between Jehovah and Satan in the opening of the Book of Job (J. M. R.).

## 110 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

He said, 'It beseemeth not me to bow in worship to man whom thou hast created of clay, of moulded loam.'

He said, 'Begone then hence; thou art a stoned one,<sup>1</sup> And the curse shall be on thee till the day of reckoning.'

He said, 'O my Lord! respite me till the day when man shall be raised from the dead.'

He said, 'One then of the respited shalt thou be Till the day of the predestined time.'

He said, 'O my Lord! because thou hast beguiled me, I will surely make all fair seeming to them on the earth; I will surely beguile them all;

Except such of them as shall be thy sincere servants.'

He said, 'This is the right way with me; .

For over none of my servants shalt thou have power, save those beguiled ones who shall follow thee.' 26-43.

Satan fell before Adam was created. God forbids the worship of any other than Himself, and would never require angels to worship men. The story is a Jewish legend. When Satan said that he would tempt men except God's chosen servants, it is asserted that God said, 'This is the right way.' Such teaching is horrible.

Hell has seven gates.

And verily, Hell is the promise for them one and all.

<sup>1</sup> That is, accursed. According to the Muhammadan tradition, Abraham drove Satan away with stones when he would have hindered him from sacrificing Ismael. Hence the custom during the pilgrimage of throwing a certain number of stones—the Shafeis, 49; the Hanafis, 70—as if at Satan, in the valley of Mina, near Mecca. The spot where the apparition of Satan to Abraham took place is marked by three small pillars, at which the stones are now thrown. Comp. Gen. xv. 11 (J. M. R.).

It hath seven Portals;<sup>1</sup> at each Portal is a separate band of them. 44-5.

The Muslims believe that there are seven hells, below each other. The first, called Jahannam, is for wicked Muslims, who will in time be relieved; the second is for Jews; the third for Christians; the fourth for Šábians; the fifth for Magians; the sixth for idolaters: and the seventh for hypocrites. Over each hell there is a guard of nineteen angels. *Súratu'l-Muddaththir* (lxxiv.) 30.

Punishment of the people of al-Hijr.

And the people of HFDJR treated God's messengers as liars.

And we brought forth our signs to them, but they drew back from them:

And they hewed them out abodes in the mountains to secure them:

But a tempest surprised them at early morn,  
And their labours availed them nothing. 80-4.

The prophet Šálíh is said to have been sent to the tribe of *Thamúd*, who dwelt in al-Hijr the rock. They had cut out dwellings in the rocks. The terrible noise was said to be caused by the angel Gabriel.

Command to repeat the seven verses.

We have already given thee the seven verses of repetition and the glorious Koran. 87.

<sup>1</sup> Thus, in Sota, 10, David is said to have rescued Absalom from 'the seven dwellings of Hell;' in Midr. on Ps. xi. 'There are seven houses of abode for the wicked in Hell;' and in Sohar ii. 150, 'Hell hath seven gates' (J. M. R.).

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This may refer to the first chapter of the Qur'án, which contains seven verses, and is called the 'Seven of Repetitions' because it is so often recited. Some say the seven longest Súras are meant, or this Súra, as originally the seventh. The word for 'repetition (*matháni*) occurs again in Súra xxxix. 24. For the view of Muslim commentators on it. See *The Historical Development of the Qur'án* (3rd ed.), pp. 60-61.

### XVI. SÚRATU'N-NAHL (THE BEE)

#### *Mecca*

THE chapter receives its name from the mention of a bee, verse seventy, having received a divine revelation. As in other Meccan chapters, the unbelieving Quraish are admonished. In verse one hundred and five, Muḥammad is charged with receiving assistance in writing the Qur'án.

Muḥammad charged with forgery.

For when it is said to them, 'What is this your Lord hath sent down?' they say, 'Fables of the ancients.' 26.

This was said because the Qur'án contains many silly stories from Jewish, Arab, and Magian traditions.

Doubters to inquire of Jews and Christians.

None have we sent before thee but men inspired—ask of those who have Books of Monition,<sup>1</sup> if ye know it not—45.

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *the family of the admonition*, i.e. Jews and Christians versed in the Pentateuch and Gospel (J. M. R.).

The Quraish taunted Muḥammad with being only a man. He replied that God sent only men. They were to inquire of those who had charge of the scriptures whether this was not true. Here the Bible is acknowledged to be the word of God. The Qur'ān sent to be proclaimed.

And to thee have we sent down this Book of Monition that thou mayest make clear to men what hath been sent down to them, and that they may ponder it. 46.

The Quraish, hating daughters, attribute them to God.

And they ascribe daughters unto God! Glory be to Him! But they desire them not for themselves:<sup>1</sup>

For when the birth of a daughter is announced to any one of them, dark shadows settle on his face, and he is sad:

He hideth him from the people because of the ill tidings: shall he keep it with disgrace or bury it in the dust?<sup>2</sup> Are not their judgments wrong? 59-61.

It was the great desire of the Arabs, like the Hindus, to have sons. When news of the birth of a daughter was brought, they were filled with deep

<sup>1</sup> The idolatrous Arabians regarded Angels as females and daughters of God. But their own preference was always for male offspring. Thus Rabbinism teaches that to be a woman is a great degradation. The modern Jew says in his Daily Prayers, fol. 5, 6, 'Blessed art thou, O Lord our God! King of the Universe! who hath not made me a woman' (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> See Sura lxxxi. 8. It is said that the only occasion on which Othman ever shed a tear was when his little daughter, whom he was burying alive, wiped the dust of the grave-earth from his beard (J. M. R.).



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sorrow. As in India among the Rajputs, female infants were often buried alive.

The bee taught of God.

And thy Lord hath taught the BEE, saying: 'Provide thee houses in the mountains, and in the trees, and in the *lives* which men do build *thee* :

Feed, moreover, on every kind of fruit, and walk the beaten paths of thy Lord.' From its belly cometh forth a fluid of varying hues,<sup>1</sup> which yieldeth medicine to man. Verily in this is a sign for those who consider.  
70-1.

The colour of honey differs according to the plants on which bees feed. Honey is useful in some cases as medicine.

Covenants not to be broken.

Be faithful in the covenant of God when ye have covenanted, and break not your oaths after ye have pledged them: for now have ye made God to stand surety for you. Verily, God hath knowledge of what ye do. 94.

The Quraish, if they were superior in numbers to those with whom they had made a treaty, thought that they might disregard it. This is condemned.

Prayer before reading the Qur'án.

When thou readest the Koran, have recourse to God for help against Satan the stoned. 100.

<sup>1</sup> The Arabs are curious in and fond of honey: Mecca alone affords eight or nine varieties—green, white, red, and brown. Burton's Pilgr. iii. 110 (J. M. R.).

Pious Muslims, before they read any part of the Qur'án, say, 'I have recourse unto God for assistance against Satan, driven away with stones.'

Muhammad accused of forgery.

And when we change one (sign) verse for another, and God knoweth best what He revealeth, they say, 'Thou art only a fabricator.' Nay! but most of them have no knowledge. 103.

The Qur'án was delivered at different times, and Muhammad sometimes contradicted himself. The doctrine of abrogation or repeal, was therefore invented. See Súra ii. 100. Muhammad, on account of these changes, was accused of forgery.

The Qur'án sent down by the Holy Spirit.

SAY: The Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup> hath brought it down with truth from thy Lord, that He may establish those who have believed, and as guidance and glad tidings to the Muslims. 104.

The 'Holy Spirit' is understood by Muslims to mean the angel Gabriel.

Muhammad charged with writing the Qur'án with the assistance of others.

We also know that they say, 'Surely a certain person teacheth him.' But the tongue of him at whom they hint is foreign,<sup>2</sup> while this *Koran* is in the plain Arabic. 105.

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> This passage has been supposed to refer to Salman the Persian. He did not, however, embrace Islam till a much later period, at Medina. Nöld., p. 110. Mr. Muir thinks that it may refer to

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When Muḥammad insisted that he himself, from his want of learning, was unable to compose such a book as the Qur'án, the Quraish replied that he had one or more assistants in the forgery. Opinions have differed to the persons who assisted him, but the stories from the Jewish Scriptures and traditions prove that some persons supplied him with materials; Muḥammad could give what he was taught in clear Arabic.

Infidels not to be treated harshly.

Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning: dispute with them in the kindest manner: thy Lord best knoweth those who stray from his way, and He best knoweth those who have yielded to his guidance. 126.

### XVII. SÚRATU BANÍ ISRÁ'ÍL. (THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL)

#### *Mecca*

THIS chapter is also entitled 'The Night Journey,' from the references to it in verse one. The chief subject of the chapter is the sin of the Quraish in rejecting Muḥammad. They are warned by the fate of rebellious unbelievers.

Suheib, son of Sinan, 'the first fruits of Greece,' as Muhammad styled him, who, while yet a boy, had been carried off by some Greeks as a slave, from Mesopotamia to Syria, brought by a party of the Beni Kalb, and sold to Abdallah ibn Jodda'an of Mecca. He became rich, and embraced Islam. Dr. Sprenger thinks the person alluded to may have been Addas, a monk of Ninéveh, who had settled at Mecca. Life of M., p. 79 (J. M. R.).

## XVII. THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL 117

God praised for the Night Journey.\*

GLORY be to Him who carried his servant by night<sup>1</sup> from the sacred temple of *Mecca* to the temple<sup>2</sup> that is more remote, whose precinct we have blessed, that we might shew him of our signs! for He is the Hearer, the Seer. 1.

Till Muḥammad's breach with the Jews, the temple of Jerusalem was the Qibla towards which he prayed. He claimed that he was carried in one night on a white animal, called Buráq, from Mecca to Jerusalem. This journey is called the Mi'rāj or 'ascent.' Muḥammad, in the morning, told every one around him that during the night he had been praying in the temple at Jerusalem. The story was ridiculed till Abú Bakr, his father-in-law, declared his belief in the journey as a matter of fact. Upon the rock on which the mosque of 'Umar stands in Jerusalem, there is still shown what is called the print of Muḥammad's foot as he leaped therefrom upon Buráq. In like manner the Buddhists pretend to show footprints of Buddha.

<sup>1</sup> Waquidv says the night-journey took place on the 17th of Rabby 1, a twelve-month before the Hejira (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Of Jerusalem; and thence through the seven heavens to the throne of God on the back of *Borak*, accompanied by Gabriel, according to some traditions; while others, and those too of early date, regard it as no more than a vision. It was, however, in all probability a dream. Muir, ii. 219; Nöld., p. 102, who give the Muhammadan sources of information (J. M. R.).

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Every man's fate bound about his neck.

And every man's fate have we fastened about his neck: and on the day of resurrection will we bring forth to him a book which shall be proffered to him wide open:

—'Read thy Book: there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day.' 14-15.

The word 'fate' means 'bird.' The Arabs, like the Romans, took omens from the flight of birds. Every man's fate is supposed to be tied to his neck like a collar of which he cannot get rid. The idea is the same as that of the Hindus—that every man's fate has been written on his forehead. This makes God the author of evil as well as good. What man does, he is obliged to do by his fate.

Cities destroyed which rejected their apostles.

For his own good only shall the guided yield to guidance, and to his own loss only shall the erring err; and the heavy laden shall not be laden with another's load. We never punished until we had first sent an apostle:

And when we willed to destroy a city, to its affluent ones did we address our bidding; but when they acted criminally therein, just was its doom, and we destroyed it with an utter destruction. 16-17.

The object is to show that God would destroy the Quraish if they rejected Muḥammad, just as he had destroyed unbelievers in former times.

Duty to parents.

Thy Lord hath ordained that ye worship none but him; and kindness to your parents, whether one or

## XVII. THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL 119

both of them attain to old age with thee; and say not to them, 'Fie!' neither reproach them; but speak to them both with respectful speech; \*

And defer humbly to them<sup>1</sup> out of tenderness; and say, 'Lord, have compassion on them both even as they reared me when I was little.' 24.

### Duty to the poor.

And let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck; nor yet open it with all openness, lest thou sin thee down in rebuke, in beggary. 31.

Be neither niggardly nor profuse.

Muḥammad called a madman.

We well know why they hearken, when they hearken unto thee, and when they whisper apart; when the wicked say, 'Ye follow no other than a man enchanted.'

See what likeness they strike out for thee! But they are in error, neither can they find the path.' 50-1.

Why Muḥammad was not allowed to work miracles.

Nothing hindered us from sending *thee* with the power of working miracles, except that the peoples of old treated them as lies. We gave to Themoud the she-camel before their very eyes, yet they maltreated her! We send not a prophet with miracles but to strike terror. 61.

It is here acknowledged that Muḥammad did not work miracles. The only miracle is said to be the Qur'an, which is not his miracle, but God's

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *lower a wing of humility* (J. M. R.).

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miracle. It is said that when the Thamúd insisted on a miracle, the prophet Ṣálih bade a she-camel, big with young, come out of a rock, but most believed not. Súratu'l-A'raf (vii.) 71.

The day of judgement. ,

One day we will summon all men with their leaders: they whose book shall be given into their right hand, shall read their book, and not be wronged a thread:

And he who has been blind here, shall be blind hereafter, and wander yet more from the way. 73-4.

At the day of judgement, it is said, each man will receive a book containing all the actions of his life. The righteous will receive it in their right hand, but the ungodly will be obliged to take it with their left, which will be bound behind their backs, their right hand being tied up to their necks.

Times of prayer.

Observe prayer at sunset, till the first darkening of the night, and the daybreak reading—for the daybreak reading hath its witnesses,

And watch unto it in the night: this shall be an excess in service:<sup>1</sup> it may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a glorious station. 80-1.

At first Muḥammad observed the three Jewish times of prayer—day-break, noon, and dusk. Two

<sup>1</sup> A work of supererogation, and therefore doubly meritorious. Thus Tr. Berachoth, fol. 4. The word station (*mekam*) is still used of the nearness to God, attained in spiritual ecstasies, etc. (J. M. R.).

additions were made, at first optional, afterwards compulsory. The tradition is that in heaven fifty prayers a day were ordered, but he got them reduced to five.

Men and Jinns could not produce a book like the Qur'án

SAY: Verily, were men and Djinn assembled to produce the like of this Koran, they could not produce its like, though the one should help the other. 90.

Why men and not angels sent as apostles.

And what hindereth men from believing, when the guidance hath come to them, but that they say, 'Hath God sent a man as an apostle?'

SAY: Did angels walk the earth as its familiars, we had surely sent them an angel-apostle out of Heaven. 96-7.

## XVIII. SÚRATU'L-KAHF (THE CAVE)

### *Mecca*

THE chapter derives its name from the story of the seven sleepers in a cave. There are two other stories about Kidhar (Jethro) and Alexander the Great. As in preceding chapters, the Quraish are warned against the danger of rejecting Muḥammad.

The sleepers in the Cave.

And thou mightest have seen the sun when it arose pass on the right of their cave, and when it set, leave them on the left, while they were in its spacious chamber. This is one of the signs of God. Guided indeed is he



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whom God guideth; but for him whom He misleadeth, thou shalt by no means find a patron, director.

And thou wouldst have deemed them awake,<sup>1</sup> though they were sleeping: and we turned them to the right and to the left. And in the entry lay their dog with paws outstretched.<sup>2</sup> Hadst thou come suddenly upon them, thou wouldst surely have turned thy back on them in flight, and have been filled with fear at them.

So we awaked them that they might question one another. Said one of them, 'How long have ye tarried here?' They said, 'We have tarried a day or part of a day.' They said, 'Your Lord knoweth best how long ye have tarried: Send now one of you with this your coin into the city, and let him mark who therein hath purest food, and from him let him bring you a supply: and let him be courteous, and not discover you to any one. 16-19.

The seven sleepers of Ephesus, who took refuge in a cave with a dog, is a well-known Christian legend, which Muhammad says was related to him by God 'with truth'. They fell asleep and supposed when they awoke that they had been only a day or part of a day in the cave, but the time is said to have been 309 years! (verse 24) The story is a fable.

The sufferings in hell.

And say: the truth is from your Lord: let him then who will, believe; and let him who will, be an infidel.

<sup>1</sup> Because they slept with their eyes open. Beidh (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> The Muhammadans believe that this dog will be admitted into Paradise. One of its traditional names is Kutmir, a word whose letters, it should be observed, are with one exception identical with Rakin (J. M. R.).

But for the offenders we have got ready the fire whose smoke shall enwrap them: and if they implore help, helped shall they be with water like molten brass which shall scald their faces. Wretched the drink! and an unhappy couch! 28.

### Iblis, one of the Jinns.

When we said to the angels, 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam', they all prostrated them save Eblis who was of the Djinn,<sup>1</sup> and revolted from his Lord's behest.—What! will ye then take him and his offspring as patrons rather than Me? and they your enemies? Sad exchange for the ungodly! 48.

Muslims believe that Iblis, Satan, has eight sons; one of whom is the author of lies, another tempts to uncleanness, a third tries to disturb the faithful at prayer, a fourth eats with the man who does not say bismilláh.

### Moses and the fish.

*Remember* when Moses said to his servant, 'I will not stop till I reach the confluence of the two seas,<sup>2</sup> or for years will I journey on.'

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad appears, according to this text, to have considered Eblis not only as the father of the Djinn, but as one of their number. The truth appears to be that Muhammad derived his doctrines of the Genii from the Persian and Indian mythology, and attempted to identify them with the Satan and demons of the Semitic races. Both the Satans and Djinn represent in the Koran the principle of Evil. See Sura [xci.] ii. 32, n. (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> The sea of Greece and the sea of Persia. But as no literal interpretation of the passage seems satisfactory, the Commentators have devised a spiritual or metaphorical one, and explain it of the two oceans of natural and supernatural knowledge. There is no trace of this legend in the Rabbinic writings (J. M. R.).

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But when they reached their confluence, they forgot their fish, and it took its way in the sea at will.

And when they had passed on, said Moses to his servant, 'Bring us our morning meal: for now have we incurred weariness from this journey.'

He said, 'What thinkest thou? When we repaired to the rock for rest I forgot the fish; and none but Satan made me forget it, so as not to mention it; and it hath taken its way in the sea in a wondrous sort.'

He said, 'It is this we were in quest of.'<sup>1</sup> And they both went back retracing their footsteps. 59-63.

The legend is that al-Khizr had disappeared in search of the water of immortality. Moses was inspired to search for him, and told that he would find him by a rock where two seas met, and where he should lose a fish which he was directed to take with him. There is another long legend about Moses and Khidr.

Dhú'l-Qarnain travels to the setting sun.

They will ask thee of Dhoulkarnain [the two-horned <sup>2</sup>].  
Say: I will recite to you an account of him.

We established his power upon the earth, and made

<sup>1</sup> The loss of our fish is a sign to us of our finding him whom we seek, namely, El-Khidr, or El-Khadir, the reputed vizier of Dhoulkarnain, and said to have drunk of the fountain of life, by virtue of which he still lives, and will live till the day of judgment. He is also said to appear, clad in *green* robes, to Muslims in distress, whence his name. Perhaps the name *Khidr* is formed from *Jethro* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Probably Alexander the Great—so called from his expeditions to the East and West. He seems to be regarded in this passage as invested with a divine commission for the extirpation of impiety and idolatry. Comp. Dan. viii. and Tr. Tanith, fol. 32. Hottinger Bibl. Orient., 109 (J. M. R.).

for him a way to everything. And a route he followed. 82-83.

Dhú'l-Qarnain, 'the two horned,' 'is supposed to be Alexander the Great, called by Muslims Iskandar ar-Rúmi, King of the Roman Empire. On his coins he is represented with two horns, or they may denote his bravery. The black mud may represent the ocean. The people who had nothing to shelter themselves may denote people living in caves. But the whole is a legend.

Dhú'l-Qarnain builds a wall. •

They said, 'O Dhoulkarnain! verily, Gog and Magog<sup>1</sup> waste this land; shall we then pay thee tribute, so thou build a rampart between us and them?'

He said, 'Better *than your tribute* is the might wherewith my Lord hath strengthened me; but help me strenuously, and I will set a barrier between you and them.

Bring me blocks of iron,—until when it filled the space between the mountain sides—'Ply,' said he, 'your bellows,'—until when he had made it red with heat (fire), he said,—'Bring me molten brass that I may pour upon it.'

And Gog and Magog were not able to scale it, neither were they able to dig through it. 93-6.

Gog and Magog are supposed to have been Turkoman tribes who made incursions. A wall of iron is supposed to have been built between the two mountains, which was strengthened by

<sup>1</sup> Ar. *Yadjoudj* and *Madjoudj*—the barbarous people of E. Asia. See Ibn Batoutah's *Travels*, iv. p. 274 (Par. ed.) (J. M. R.).

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pouring over it molten brass. It may be an exaggerated account of some fortification.

Were the ocean ink, it would not suffice to write the words of God.

SAY: Should the sea become ink, to write the words of my Lord, the sea would surely fail ere the words of my Lord would fail, though we brought its like in aid. 109.

### XIX. SÚRATU MARYAM (MARY)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter is so called from its account of the Virgin Mary. The numerous errors it contains shows that Muḥammad was not acquainted with the Bible, and was indebted to Jewish or Christian informants, who were themselves very ignorant of their own traditions.

The birth of Jesus Christ.

And make mention in the Book, of Mary, when she went apart from her family, eastward,<sup>1</sup>

And took a veil to shroud herself from them:<sup>2</sup> and we sent our spirit<sup>3</sup> to her, and he took before her the form of a perfect man.

<sup>1</sup> To an eastern chamber in the temple to pray. Or it may mean, to some place eastward from Jerusalem, or from the house of her parents (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Thus the Protev. Jac. c. 12 says that Mary, although at a later period, ἔκρυβεν ἑαυτήν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ.—But Wahl, *she laid aside her veil* (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> Gabriel (J. M. R.).

She said: 'I fly for refuge from thee to the God of Mercy! If thou fearest Him, *begone from me.*'

He said: 'I am only a messenger of thy Lord, that I may bestow on thee a holy son.'

She said: 'How shall I have a son, when man hath never touched me' and I am not unchaste.'

He said: 'So shall it be. Thy Lord hath said: 'Easy is this with me:' and we will make him a sign to mankind, and a mercy from us. For it is a thing decreed.'

And she conceived him,<sup>1</sup> and retired with him to a far-off place.

And the throes came upon her<sup>2</sup> by the trunk of a palm. She said: 'Oh, would that I had died ere this, and been a thing forgotten, forgotten quite!'

And one cried to her from below her:<sup>3</sup> 'Grieve not thou, thy Lord hath provided a streamlet at thy feet:—

And shake the trunk of the palm-tree toward thee: it will drop fresh ripe dates upon thee.

Eat then and drink, and be of cheerful eye:<sup>4</sup> and shouldst thou see a man,

Say,—Verily, I have vowed abstinence to the God of mercy.—To no one will I speak this day.'

Then came she with the babe to her people, bearing him. They said, 'O Mary! now hast thou done a strange thing!

<sup>1</sup> It is clear from this passage, and verse 36, that Muhammad believed Jesus to have been conceived *by an act of the divine will*. Comp. Sura iii. 52; see also note at Sura ii. 81 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the throes urged her to the trunk of*, etc. (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> This was either the Infant which spoke as soon as born, or Gabriel. Comp. Thilo Cod. Apoc. 136-139 on this passage. Beidhawi explains: *from behind the palm tree* (J. M. R.).

<sup>4</sup> Or, *settle, calm thine eye, refresh thine eye*. The birth of a son is still called *korrat ol ain* (J. M. R.).

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O sister of Aaron!<sup>1</sup> Thy father was not a man of wickedness, nor unchaste thy mother.'

And she made a sign to them, pointing towards the babe. They said, 'How shall we speak with him who is in the cradle, an infant?'

It said, 'Verily, I am the servant of God; He hath given me the Book, and He hath made me a prophet;

And He hath made me blessed wherever I may be, and hath enjoined me prayer and almsgiving so long as I shall live;

And to be duteous to her that bare me: and he hath not made me proud, depraved.

And the peace of God was on me the day I was born, and will be the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised to life.'

This is Jesus, the son of Mary; this is a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt. 16-35.

Muhammad claimed that the above was revealed to him by God through the angel Gabriel. It contains legends current among ignorant Christians and Jews in the time of Muhammad, contained in a book called the *Gospel of the Infancy of Christ*. Jesus Christ was born in a stall and not under a palm-tree; the stories of the ripe dates falling, and Jesus speaking as a child, are mere fables. See Matthew i. and Luke, ii.

<sup>1</sup> The anachronism is probably only apparent. See Sura iii. 1, n. Muhammad may have supposed that this Aaron (or Harun) was the son of Imran and Anna. Or, if Aaron the brother of Moses, be meant, Mary may be called his sister, either because she was of the Levitical race, or by way of comparison (J. M. R.).

## Abraham and his father.

Make mention also in the Book of Abraham: for he was a man of truth, a Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

When he said to his Father, 'O my Father! why dost thou worship that which neither seeth nor heareth, nor profiteth thee aught?

O my Father! verily now hath knowledge come to me which hath not come to thee. Follow me therefore—I will guide thee into an even path.

O my Father! worship not Satan, for Satan is a rebel against the God of Mercy.

O my Father! indeed I fear lest a chastisement from the God of Mercy light upon thee, and thou become Satan's vassal.'

He said, 'Castest thou off my Gods, O Abraham? If thou forbear not, I will surely stone thee. Begone from me for a length of time.'

He said, 'Peace be on thee! I will pray my Lord for thy forgiveness, for he is gracious to me. 42-9.

This is a Muslim legend. It is true that Terah, Abraham's father, probably worshipped idols, but we have no account of any such conversation. See Gen. xi. 26-31; xii. 1-4.

Idris taken to heaven.

And commemorate Edris<sup>2</sup> in 'the Book;' for he was a man of truth, a Prophet. 57.

<sup>1</sup> The title *Nabi*, prophet, is used of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as depositaries of the worship of the one true God, but with a mission restricted to their own families; whereas Houd, Saleh, Shoaib, etc., are designated as (*Resoul*) apostles and envoys, charged with a more extended mission to the tribes of Arabia. In Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, etc., are united the office and gift both of prophet (*nabi*) and apostle (*resoul*) (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Enoch. Beidhawi derives the name Edris from the Ar. *darasa*, to search out, with reference to his knowledge of divine mysteries. The Heb. *Enoch*, in like manner, means *initiated* (J. M. R.).



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Idrís is generally supposed to be Enoch. The Muslim legend is that he was the first who wrote with a pen and studied astronomy and arithmetic. The Bible makes no such statements. See Gen. v. 21-24.

God sends devils to incite infidels to sin.

Seest thou not that we send the Satans against the Infidels to urge them into sin? 86.

The Bible says, on the contrary, that God tempteth no man. James i. 13.

Attributing children to God a great sin.

They say: 'The God of Mercy hath gotten offspring.' Now have ye done a monstrous thing!

Almost might the very Heavens be rent thereat, and the Earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in fragments,

That they ascribe a son to the God of Mercy, when it becometh not the God of Mercy to beget a son! 91-3.

The Muslim's idea is that Christians think that God begot a son in the ordinary way. This is blasphemy. The word in the Qur'án involves the idea of sex.

### XX. SÚRATU TÁ HÁ (TÁ HÁ)

*Mecca*

**THE** title is taken from the two letters which stand at the beginning of the chapter; the meaning of which is uncertain. A great part of the chapter is taken up with an account of Moses.

The object is to encourage Muḥammad as a prophet, in the expectation to be assisted like Moses. This chapter is said to be one of the earliest in the Qur'án.

Moses and the Fire.

Hath the history of Moses reached thee?

When he saw a fire and said to his family, 'Tarry ye *here*, for I perceive a fire:

Haply I may bring you a brand from it, or find at the fire a guide.'<sup>1</sup>

And when he came to it, he was called to, 'O Moses!

Verily, I am thy Lord: therefore pull off thy shoes: for thou art in the holy valley of Towá.

And I have chosen thee: hearken then to what shall be revealed. 8-13.

The Muslim legend is that on a dark night in the valley Tuwa, the wife of Moses, was delivered of a son. He had lost his way, when, on a sudden, he saw a fire. For the true account see Exodus iii. 1-6.

The Magicians were converted.

And the magicians fell down and worshipped. They said, 'We believe in the Lord of Aaron and of Moses.'

Said Pharaoh, 'Believe ye on him ere I give you leave? He, in sooth, is your Master who hath taught you magic. I will therefore cut off your hands **and** your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify **you on** trunks of the palm and assuredly shall ye learn which

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *guidance*. Moses had lost his way, say the Commentators, when journeying to Egypt to visit his mother (J. M. R.).

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of us is severest in punishing, and who is the more abiding.'<sup>1</sup>

They said, 'We will not have more regard to thee than to the clear tokens which have come to us, or than to Him who hath made us: doom the doom thou wilt: Thou canst only doom as to this present life: of a truth we have believed on our Lord that he may pardon us our sins and the sorcery to which thou hast forced us, for God is better, and more abiding than thou.'<sup>2</sup> 14-16.

The punishment threatened by Pharaoh is a mere legend. See Exodus viii. 16-19.

Story of the golden calf.

He said, 'Of a truth now have we proved thy people since thou didst leave them, and Samiri had led them astray.'

And Moses returned to his people, angered, sorrowful.

He said, 'O my people! did not your Lord promise you a good promise? Was the time of *my absence* long to you? or desired ye that wrath from your Lord should light upon you, that ye failed in your promise to me?'

They said, 'Not of our own accord have we failed in the promise to thee, but we were made to bring loads of the people's trinkets, and we threw them *into the fire*—and Samiri likewise cast them in, and brought forth to them a corporeal lowing calf: and they said, "This is your God and the God of Moses, whom he hath forgotten."'

What! saw they not that it returned them no answer, and could neither hurt nor help them?

<sup>1</sup> In punishing. Beidh (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> To recompense. Beidh (J. M. R.).

And Aaron had before said to them, 'O my people! by this calf are ye only proved: surely your Lord is the God of Mercy: follow me therefore and obey my bidding.'

They said, 'We will not cease devotion to it, till Moses come back to us.'

He said, 'O Aaron! when thou sawest that they had gone astray, what hindered thee from following me? Hast thou then disobeyed my command?'

He said, 'O Son of my mother! seize me not by my beard, nor by my head: indeed I feared lest thou shouldst say, "Thou hast rent the children of Israel asunder, and hast not observed my orders."'

He said, 'And what was thy motive, O Samiri?' He said, 'I saw what they saw not: so I took a handful of dust from the track<sup>1</sup> of the messenger of God, and flung it into the calf, for so my soul prompted me.'

He said, 'Begone then: verily thy doom even in this life shall be to say, "Touch me not." And there is a threat against thee, which thou shalt not escape *hereafter*. Now look at thy god to which thou hast continued so devoted: we will surely burn it and reduce it to ashes, which we will cast into the sea. 87-98.

It is doubtful who is meant by as-Sámiri. He said that he took a handful of dust from the footsteps of the messenger of God, that is Gabriel, which being cast into the calf, caused it to become animated and low. This legend is mentioned in chapter vii. 150. For the true account, read Exodus xxxii.

<sup>1</sup> From the track of Gabriel's horse, or of Gabriel himself (J. M. R.).

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### The story of Adam.

And of old We made a covenant with Adam; but he forgot it; and we found no firmness of *purpose* in him.

And when We said to the angels, 'Fall down and worship Adam,' they worshipped all, save Eblis, *who* refused: and We said, 'O Adam! this truly is a foe to thee and to thy wife. Let him not therefore drive you out of the garden, and ye become wretched;

For to thee *is it granted* that thou shalt not hunger therein, neither shalt thou be naked;

And that thou shalt not thirst therein, neither shalt thou parch with heat;'

But Satan whispered him: said he, 'O Adam! shall I shew thee the tree of Eternity,<sup>1</sup> and the Kingdom that faileth not?'

And they both ate thereof, and their nakedness appeared to them, and they began to sew of the leaves of the Garden to cover them, and Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray.

Afterwards his Lord chose him for himself, and was turned towards him, and guided him. 115-120.

For true account, read Gen. iii.

Unbelievers blind at the day of judgement.

But whoso turneth away from my monition, his truly shall be a life of misery:

And We will assemble him *with others* on the day of Resurrection, blind.'

He will say, 'O my Lord! why hast thou assembled me *with others*, blind? whereas I was endowed with sight.

<sup>1</sup> It should be observed that here and in Sura vii. 19, Muhammad seems unaware of the distinction between the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, as given in Gen. ii. 9, and iii. 5 (J. M. R.).

He will answer, 'Thus is it, because our signs came unto thee and thou didst forget them, and thus shalt thou be forgotten this day.' 104-7.

## XXI. SÚRATU'L-ANBIYÁ' (THE PROPHETS)

### *Mecca*

WHEN this chapter was written, the Quraish scoffed at Muḥammad. Stories are given to show that God either delivers prophets out of the hands of their enemies or avenges their death. An account of Abraham with whom Muḥammad compares himself, is given in detail.

The Qur'án a heap of dreams.

'Nay,' say they, 'it is the medley of dreams: nay, he hath forged it: nay, he is a poet: let him come to us with a sign as *the prophets* of old were sent.' 5.

Ungodly cities destroyed.

And how many a guilty city have we broken down, and raised up after it other peoples:

And when they felt our vengeance, lo! they fled from it. 'Flee not,' said the angels in mockery, 'but come back to that wherein ye revelled, and to your abodes! Questions will haply be put to you.'

They said, 'Oh, woe to us! Verily we have been evil doers.'

And this ceased not to be their cry, until we made them like reaped corn, extinct. 11-15.

Progress of creation.

Do not the infidels see that the heavens and the earth were both a solid mass, and that we clave them asunder,

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and that by means of water we give life to everything?  
Will they not then believe?

And we set mountains on the earth lest it should move with them, and we made on it broad passages between them as routes for their guidance;

And we made the heaven a roof strongly upholden; yet turn they away from its signs.

And He it is who hath created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon, each moving swiftly in its sphere. 31-4.

Muslims believe that the heavens and the earth were once one mass of matter, but God separated them, dividing the heaven into seven heavens, and the earth into as many storeys.

Story of Abraham and the idols.

Of old we gave unto Abraham his direction, for we knew him worthy.

When he said to his Father and to his people, 'What are these images to which ye are devoted?

They said, 'We found our fathers worshiping them.'

He said, 'Truly ye and your fathers have been in a plain mistake.'

They said, 'Hast thou come unto us in earnest? or art thou of those who jest?'

He said, 'Nay, your Lord is Lord of the Heavens and of the Earth, who hath created them both; and to this am I one of those who witness:

—And, by God, I will certainly lay a plot against your idols, after ye shall have retired and turned your backs.'

So, he broke them all in pieces, except the chief of them, that to it they might return, *inquiring*.

They said, 'Who hath done this to our gods? Verily he is *one* of the unjust.'

They said, 'We heard a youth make mention of them: they call him Abraham.'

They said, 'Then bring him before the people's eyes, that they may witness *against him*.'

They said, 'Hast thou done this to our gods, O Abraham?'

He said, 'Nay, that their chief hath done it: but ask ye them, if they can speak.'

So they turned their *thoughts* upon themselves, and said, 'Ye truly are the impious persons.'

Then became headstrong in their former error and exclaimed, 'Thou knowest that these speak not.'

He said, 'What! do ye then worship, instead of God, that which doth not profit you at all, nor injure you? Fie on you and on that ye worship instead of God! What! do ye not then understand?'

They said: 'Burn him, and come to the succour of your gods: if ye will do *anything at all*.'

We said, 'O fire! be thou cold, and to Abraham a safety!'<sup>1</sup>

And they sought to lay a plot against him, but we made them the sufferers. 52-70.

'We gave unto Abraham his direction.' It is said that ten books of divine revelation were given to Abraham. The story is a Jewish legend. Abraham's father, enraged, gave him up to Nimrod to be burnt in a vast fire, but it lost its heat. There is nothing about this in the Bible.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *let peace be upon Abraham*. Comp. Targ. Jon. on Gen. xi. 28, from the mistranslation of which this legend took its rise, the word *ur* in Heb. meaning *fire*. See also Targ. Jon. on Gen. xv. 7. The legend was adopted by some of the Eastern Christians; and commemorated in the Syrian Calendar on Jan. 29 (Hyde de Rel. V. Pers. 74). Comp. the Abyssinian Calendar on Jan. 25. (Ludolf. Hist., p. 409) (J. M. R.).



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Winds and demons subject to Solomon.

And to Solomon we subjected the strongly blowing wind: it sped at his bidding to the land we had blessed; for we know all things:

And sundry Satans who should dive for him and perform other work beside: and we kept watch over them. 81-2.

Muhammad adopted the belief of ignorant Arabs that Solomon had a seal inscribed with the name of God, giving him control over the winds and jinns. The wind would transport his carpet or throne wherever he pleased. He could compel jinns to dive to get pearls for him or to do any other work. He was also supposed to be acquainted with the language of beasts and birds. All these are fables.

The birth of Jesus miraculous.

And her who kept her maidenhood, and into whom<sup>1</sup> we breathed of our spirit, and made her and her son a sign to all creatures. 91.

This verse shows that Muhammad believed that Jesus was born through God's spirit.

Quotation from the Old Testament.

And now, since the Law was given, have we written in the Psalms that 'my servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth.' 105.

<sup>1</sup> See Sura lxvi. 12. It is quite clear from these two passages that Muhammad believed in the Immaculate and miraculous conception of Jesus (J. M. R.).

This is the only Scripture text quoted in the Qur'án.

## XXII. SÚRATU'L-HAJJ (THE PILGRIMAGE)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter gets its name from the command to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca. The unbelief of the Quraish, the punishment of hypocrites, and the folly of idolatry, are other topics.

Abraham commanded to cleanse the Ka'ba.

And *call to mind* when we assigned the site of the House to Abraham *and said*: 'Unite not aught with Me in worship, and cleanse My House for those who go in procession round it, and who stand or bow in worship.' 27.

The legend is that Adam built the first Ka'ba. Some say that this was taken up to heaven at the flood, and rebuilt by Abraham and Ismael. It was an old idolatrous temple of the Arabs, which Muḥammad turned to his own purposes.

The pilgrimage to Mecca instituted.

And proclaim to the peoples a PILGRIMAGE: Let them come to thee on foot and on every fleet camel, arriving by every deep defile:

That they may bear witness of its benefits to them, and may make mention of God's name on the appointed days, over the brute beasts with which He hath supplied them for sustenance; Therefore eat thereof yourselves, and feed the needy, the poor:

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Then let them bring the neglect of their persons to a close,<sup>1</sup> and let them pay their vows, and circuit the ancient House.

This *dó*. And he that respecteth the sacred ordinances of God, this will be best for him with his Lord. The flesh of cattle is allowed you, save of those *already* specified to you. Shun ye, therefore, the pollutions of idols; and shun ye the word of falsehood; 28-32.

It is alleged that Abraham was told to proclaim this pilgrimage. Before the time of Muḥammad, the Arabs went on pilgrimage to Mecca to celebrate the memory of Abraham and Ismael. Muḥammad made it one of the five principal duties of his religion. He wished Mecca to become a point of union for all Muslims. The city is enriched by the pilgrimage. Pilgrims were forbidden to shave their heads, to cut their beards or nails during the pilgrimage. They must not even scratch themselves, lest they should kill an insect; but they might rub the body with the palm of the hand.

The fate of waverers.

And to every people have we appointed rites, that they may commemorate the name of God over the brute beasts which he hath provided for them. And your God is the one God. To Him, therefore, surrender yourselves: and bear thou good tidings to those who humble them. 35.

<sup>1</sup> That is, the uncut beards, nails, etc. (J. M. R.).

Sacrifices appointed for every religion.

And the camels have we appointed you for the sacrifice to God: *much* good have ye in them. Make mention, therefore, of the name of God over them *when ye slay them*, as they stand in a row; and when they are fallen over on their sides, eat of them, and feed him who is content *and asketh not*, and him who asketh. Thus have We subjected them to you, to the intent ye should be thankful. 37.

‘Idu’d-Duḥá or ‘Idu’l-adḥá, the Feast of Sacrifice, also called Baqar-‘id is the most important feast during the Muslim year. Muḥammad first intended it to represent the great day of atonement of the Jews; but failing to gain them over, ye adopted the Arab sacrifice. There is a tradition that Muḥammad said, ‘Verily the animal sacrificed will come with its horns, its hair, its hoofs, and will make the scales of the offerer’s good actions heavy.’ The animal sacrificed *may* be either goat, or sheep, a cow or a camel. It is also said that it commemorates the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham.

War against infidels permitted in self-defence.

A sanction is given to those who, because they have suffered outrages, have taken up arms; and verily, God is well able to succour them. 40.

At first Muḥammad exhorted his followers to bear injuries patiently. When he became stronger he gave out that God allowed him and them to

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defend themselves; and lastly, as his forces increased, he professed to have divine permission to destroy idolatry, and set up the true faith by the sword.

All prophets tempted by Satan.

That He may make that which Satan hath injected, a trial to those in whose hearts is a disease, and whose hearts are hardened.—Verily, the wicked are in a far-gone severance from the truth! 52.

The story is that one day when Muḥammad was reading the Qur'án, he spoke of some idols as 'most high and beauteous damsels.' When Gabriel told him of what he had said, he was deeply grieved, till this verse was revealed to him.

Revenge of personal injuries permitted.

So shall it be. And whoever in making exact reprisal for injury done him, shall again be wronged, God will assuredly aid him: for God is most Merciful, Gracious. 59.

Such a permission has encouraged the blood-feuds prevalent among Muḥammadans.

### XXIII. SÚRATU'L-MÚ'MINÚN (THE TRUE BELIEVERS)

*Mecca*

THIS sura greatly resembles the seventh, probably due to the fact that they belong to the same period. Prophets, in all ages, like Muḥammad,

were rejected and treated as impostors, but unbelievers meet in the end with sore punishment, and so would it be with the Quraish.

Muslim intercourse with women.

HAPPY now the BELIEVERS,

Who humble them in their prayer,

And who keep aloof from vain words,<sup>1</sup>

And who are doers of alms deeds,

And who restrain their appetites,

(Save with their wives, or the slaves whom their right hands possess: for *in that case* they shall be free from blame.) 1-6. .

Muslims are allowed four wives, and they may divorce them as often as they please. Hasan was called the divorcer, because he divorced so many wives. Muslims may also consort with all their female slaves taken in war, bought or received as a gift. This is one of the darkest features of Islám; its consequences are most unhappy.

Unbelievers of former prophets.

And we sent among them an apostle from out themselves, with, 'Worship ye God! ye have no other God than He: will ye not therefore fear Him?'

And the chiefs of His people who believed not, and who deemed the meeting with us in the life to come to be a lie, and whom we had richly supplied in this present life, said, 'This is but a man like yourselves; he eateth of what ye eat,

<sup>1</sup> In prayer. Eccl. v. 1; Matt. vi. 7. But it may be understood of *idle talk* generally (J. M. R.).

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And he drinketh of what ye drink :

And if ye obey a man like yourselves, then ye will surely be undone.

What! doth he foretell you, that after ye shall be dead and become dust and bones, ye shall be brought forth ?

Away, away with his predictions !

There is no life beyond our present life ; we die, and we live, and we shall not be quickened again !

This is merely a man who forgeth a lie about God : and we will not believe him.'

He said, 'O my Lord! help me against this charge of imposture.'

He said, 'Yet a little, and they will soon repent them !' 33-42.

The Quraish acted similarly, charging Muḥammad with imposture, and would be punished in like manner.

The day of Judgement and the punishment of the wicked.

And when the trumpet shall be sounded, the ties of kindred between them shall cease on that day ; neither shall they ask each other's help.

They whose balances shall be heavy, shall be the blest.

But they whose balances shall be light,—these are they who shall lose their souls, abiding in hell for ever :

The fire shall scorch their faces, and their lips shall quiver therein :—

—'What! Were not my signs rehearsed unto you? and did ye not treat them as lies?'

They shall say, 'O our Lord! our ill-fortune prevailed against us, and we became an erring people.

O our Lord! Bring us forth hence: if we go back again *to our sins*, we shall indeed be evil doers.'

He will say; 'Be ye driven down into it; and, address me not.' 16:1-10.

The Muslims believe that at the day of judgment two angels will stand on the bridge with a balance. Those whose good works are heavier even by the weight of a hair, will go to paradise, while those whose good works are light will be cast down into hell. In opposition to this, Christianity teaches that all have sinned and cannot be saved by their good works; but, only through the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### XXIV. SÚRATU'N-NÚR (THE LIGHT)

##### *Mecca*

DURING the return of the Muslim army from an expedition, 'Áyesha, one of the wives of Muḥammad, was left behind, and doubts were expressed about her chastity. This chapter was revealed to clear her of the calumny. Directions are given about women being closely veiled when they go out. Such laws are necessary from the facility of divorce allowed by Islám.

**Punishment of false accusers of virtuous women.**

They who defame virtuous women, and bring not four witnesses, scourge them with *fourscore* stripes, and receive ye not their testimony for ever, for these are perverse persons—

Save those who afterwards repent and live virtuously; for truly God is Lenient, Merciful! 4-5.



'Áyesha's slanderers reproved.

Of a truth, they who advanced that lie<sup>1</sup> were a large number of you; but regard it not as an evil to you. No, it is an advantage to you.<sup>2</sup> To every man among them shall it be done according to the offence he hath committed; and as to that person among them who took on himself to aggravate it, a sore punishment doth await him. 11.

Those who had spread the report received each eighty stripes. It is also said that 'Áyesha was so displeased with 'Alí for speaking of her in such a disparaging manner that she contrived to bring about the murder of his two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusain.

Rules about entering houses.

O ye who believe; enter not into other houses than your own, until ye have asked leave, and have saluted its inmates. This will be best for you: haply ye will bear this in mind.

And if ye find no one therein, then enter it not till leave be given you; and if it be said to you, 'Go ye back,' then go ye back. This will be more blameless in you, and God knoweth what ye do. 27-28.

It was the custom in Arabia, before Islám, to enter houses without permission.

<sup>1</sup> The rumour of improper intimacy between Ayesha and Safwan Ibn El Moattal, during Muhammad's return from the expedition against the tribe of Mostaliq (an. H. 9), in which he was separated from her for an entire day, which she passed in the company of Safwan, who had found her when accidentally left behind. Verses 4-26 were revealed shortly after the return (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Whose characters are cleared (J. M. R.).

## About the behaviour of women

And speak to the believing women that they refrain their eyes, and observe continence: and that they display not their ornaments, except those which are external; and that they throw their veils over their bosoms, and display not their ornaments, except to their husbands or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husbands' sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male domestics who have no natural force, or to children who note not women's nakedness. And let them not strike their feet together, so as to discover their hidden ornaments.<sup>1</sup> And be ye all turned to God, O ye Believers! that it may be well with you. 31.

Directions are given as to whom women may show themselves. Making a tinkling noise with bangles is also forbidden.

## Rule with regard to aged women.

As to women who are past childbearing, and have no hope of marriage, no blame shall attach to them if they lay aside their *outer* garments, but so as not to shew their ornaments. Yet if they abstain from this, it will be better for them: and God Heareth, Knoweth. 59.

## Freedom about eating.

No crime<sup>2</sup> shall it be in the blind, or in the lame, or in the sick, *to eat at your tables*: or in yourselves, if

<sup>1</sup> That is, the anklets. Comp. Isa. iii. 16, 18 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> This verse was intended to relieve the scruples of the Muslims, who, following the superstitious customs of the Arabs, thought that they ought not to admit the blind, etc., to their tables, to eat alone, or in a house of which they were entrusted with the key. (J. M. R.).

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ye eat in your own houses, or in the houses of your fathers, or of your mothers, or of your brothers, or of your sisters, or of your uncles on the father's side, or of your aunts on the father's side, or of your uncles on the mother's side, or of your aunts on the mother's side, or in those of which ye possess the keys, or in the house of your friend. No blame shall attach to you whether ye eat together or apart. 60.

Some Arabs had superstitious ideas on these points like the Hindus.

Muslims to salute one another.

And when ye enter houses, salute one another with a 'good and blessed greeting as from God. Thus doth God make clear to you His signs, that haply ye may comprehend them. 61.

A Muslim writer says if there be nobody in the house salute yourselves, and the angels will return the salutation.

### XXV. SÚRATU'L-FURQÁN (THE ILLUMINATION)

#### *Mecca*

AL-FURQÁN is one of the names of the Qur'án. It is also rendered discrimination. The object of this chapter, as in many others, is to rebuke the unbelief of the Quraish.

Muhammad accused of forgery.

And the infidels say, 'This *Koran* is a mere fraud of his own devising, and others have helped him with it,<sup>1</sup> who had come *hither* by outrage and lie.'

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Sura xvi. 105. The frequency with which Muhammad feels it necessary to rebut this charge by mere denial is strongly indicative of its truth (J. M. R.).

And they say, 'Tales of the ancients that he hath put in writing! and they were dictated to him morn and even.'

SAY: He hath sent it down who knoweth the secrets of the Heavens and of the Earth. He truly is the Gracious, the Merciful.

And they say, 'What sort of apostle is this? He eateth food and he walketh the streets! Unless an angel be sent down and take part in his warnings,

Or a treasure be thrown down to him, so he have a garden that supplieth him with food . . .<sup>1</sup> and these unjust persons say, 'Ye follow but a man enchanted.'

See what likenesses they strike out for thee! But they err, and cannot find their way. 5-10.

The Qur'án was said to contain fables of the ancients which Muḥammad heard and then wrote down.

### Day of Judgement.

On the day when they shall see the angels, no good news shall there be for the guilty ones, and they shall cry out, 'A barrier that cannot be passed'!<sup>2</sup>

Then will we proceed to the works which they have wrought, and make them as scattered dust.

Happier, on that day, the inmates of the Garden as to abode, and better off as to place of noontide slumber!

On that day shall the heaven with its clouds be cleft, and the angels shall be sent down, descending:

<sup>1</sup> Supply, *we will not believe* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Or, *far, far be they removed*. The same words occur at the end of verse 55. The Commentators doubt whether they are spoken by the wicked of the impossibility of their attaining Paradise, or by the angels to the wicked (J. M. R.).

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On that day shall all empire be in very deed with the God of Mercy, and a hard day shall it be for the Infidels.

And on that day shall the wicked one bite his hands, and say, 'Oh! would that, I had taken the *same* path with the Apostle! 24-9.

The Muslim belief is that the day of judgement will be over by noon, when the blessed will enter Paradise and sinners hell. The heavens are to be cloven to make way for the clouds that shall descend with the angels bearing the book where-in every man's actions are recorded.

The Qur'án sent down in fragments.

And the infidels say, 'Unless the Koran be sent down to him all at once. . . .' But in this way would we stablish thy heart by it; in parcels have we parcelled it out to thee;

Nor shall they come to thee with puzzling questions, but we will come to thee with the truth, and their best solution. 34-5.

Muslims thought that the Books of Moses, the Psalms, and Gospel, were sent down from heaven all at once, whereas it was twenty-three years before the Qur'án was completed. The twenty-two sūras first written contain on an average only five lines. The next twenty sūras contain sixteen lines. The average length of the sūras after the flight is five pages.

## XXVI. SŪRATU'SH-SHU'ARÁ' (THE POETS)

*Mecca*

NEARLY the whole of 'this chapter consists of repetitions of the history of Moses, Abraham, Noah, Húd, Šálih, Lot, and Shuaib, which need not be quoted. These prophets were called impostors, liars, and madmen, by those rejecting them. Muḥammad was treated in like manner by the Quraish. The chapter owes its title to certain poets, mentioned in the concluding verses.

Muḥammad grieved at the unbelief of the Quraish.

TA. SIN. MIM. These are the signs of the lucid Book.

Haply thou wearest thyself away with grief because they will not believe. 1-2.

The Qur'án given to Muḥammad through Gabriel.

Verily from the Lord of the Worlds hath this *Book* come down;

The faithful spirit hath come down with it

Upon thy heart, that thou mightest become a warner—

In the clear Arabic tongue. 193-5.

The 'faithful spirit' denotes Gabriel. Muḥammad was merely the instrument; the words are from God. It is pretended that the Qur'án is supported by the scriptures of former ages. Some Jewish converts to Islám applied the prophecies about Jesus Christ in the Old Testament to

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Muhammad. If the Qur'ân had been revealed to foreigners, they would not have believed.

Devils descend upon liars.

Shall I tell you on whom Satans descend?

They descend on every lying, wicked person. 221-2.

Muhammad's enemies were assisted by devils. Devils are said to listen at the door of heaven to hear what they can.

Unbelieving and believing poets.

It is the POETS<sup>1</sup> whom the 'erring follow:

Seest thou not how they rove distraught in every valley?

And that they say that which they do not? 224-6.

Certain poets ridiculed and opposed Muhammad. They are called 'rovers through the valley,' or persons who wander about as if mad. Several poets were employed by Muhammad to meet the satire of the former. These were in their right mind and pious Muslims. Muhammad is reported to have said: 'Ply them with satires, for they wound more deeply than arrows.'

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad found it necessary to employ the pens of certain poets to defend himself and his religion from the ridicule and satire of other poets, whose productions were recited at the great annual fair held at Okatz, the Olympus of the Hejaz. The poems which were judged the best were written up in letters of gold, or suspended (hence called Moallakat) in the Caaba. These poetical contests were subsequently suppressed by Muhammad, as offering openings for discussions which might prove inconvenient, and dangerous to his rising claims (J. M. R.).

## XXVII. SÚRATU'N-NAML (THE ANT)

*Mecca*

THE chapter derives its name from the story of an ant. The Qur'án is again and again ascribed to God. The story of the Queen of Saba and her conversion to Islám is the chief new feature of the chapter.

The Qur'án certainly given by God.

But thou hast certainly received the Koran from the Wise, the Knowing. 5.

Moses at the burning bush.

*Bear in mind* when Moses said to his family, 'I have perceived a fire;

I will bring you tidings from it, or will bring you a blazing brand, that he may warm you.'

And when he came to it, he was called to, 'Blessed, He who is in the fire, and He who is about it; and glory be to God, the Lord of the worlds!

O Moses! verily, I am God, the Mighty, the Wise! 6-9.

The account here differs from that in chapters xx. 11-25 and xxviii. 29-33. It also differs from the Bible. See Exodus iii. 1-6.

Solomon's army and the ants.

Till they reached the Valley of Ants. Said AN ANT, 'O ye ants, enter your dwellings. lest Solomon and his army crush you and know it not.'

Then smiled *Solomon*, laughing at her words, and he said, 'Stir me up, O Lord, to be thankful for thy favour which thou hast shewed upon me and upon my



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parents, and to do righteousness that shall be well pleasing to thee, and bring me in, by thy mercy, among thy servants the righteous.' 16-19.

Muhammad here makes God repeat the Jewish fables about Solomon knowing the speech of birds, and having armies of jinns and birds as well as of men.

The Queen and the throne.

Said he, 'Make her throne so that she know it not: we shall see whether she hath or hath not guidance.'

And when she came he said, 'Is thy throne like this?' She said, 'As though it were the same.' 'And we,' said he, 'have had knowledge given us before her, and have been Muslims.'

But the gods she had worshipped instead of God had led her astray: for she was of a people who believe not.

It was said to her. 'Enter the Palace:' and when she saw it, she thought it a lake of water, and bared her legs. He said, 'It is a palace paved with glass.'

She said, 'O my Lord! I have sinned against my own soul, and I resign myself, with Solomon, to God the Lord of the Worlds.' 41-5.

Solomon questioned the queen about the altered throne. She thought it was the same as hers. Solomon had built a palace for Balqis. The floor was of transparent glass, laid over running water, in which fish were swimming. The queen, supposing it to be water, lifted up her robe and discovered her legs, which were said to be hairy. After some jinns had removed the

hair, it is said that Solomon married her, and that she became a Muslim. Muḥammad pretended that this silly legend had been revealed to him by God. See 1 Kings x. 1-13, for a true account of her visit.

A beast a sign of the approach of the day of Judgement.

When the doom shall be ready to light upon them, we will cause a monster to come forth to them out of the earth, and cry to them, 'Verily men have not firmly believed our signs.' 84.

This monster is supposed to be sixty cubits high, with two wings. It is to be a compound of various animals, to have the head of a bull, the horns of a stag, the neck of an ostrich, the legs of a camel, the voice of an ass. It will mark the faces of believers with Mú'min, and unbelievers with Káfir.

## XXVIII. SÚRATU'L-QAṢAṢ (THE STORY)

### *Mecca*

A GREAT part of this chapter is taken up with the repetition of the history of Moses, with whom Muḥammad wished to be compared. Only a few new points will be noticed.

Moses said to have been adopted by Pharaoh's wife.

And Pharaoh's wife said: 'Joy of the eye to me and thee! put him not to death: haply he may be useful to us, or we may adopt him as a son.' 8.

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In the Bible it is stated that he was adopted, not by Pharaoh's wife, but by his daughter. See Exod. ii. 5-10.

### Moses killing the Egyptian.

And he entered a city at the time when its inhabitants would not observe him, and found therein two men fighting: the one, of his own people; the other, of his enemies. And he who was of his own people asked his help against him who was of his enemies. And Moses smote him with his fist and slew him. Said he, 'This is a work of Satan; for he is an enemy, a manifest misleader.' 14.

### The books of Moses and the Qur'án rejected by the Quraish.

Yet when the truth came to them from our very presence, they said, 'Unless the like *powers* be given to him that were given to Moses. . . .'<sup>1</sup> But did they not disbelieve in what of old was given to Moses? They said, 'Two works of sorcery'<sup>2</sup> have helped each other;' and they said, 'We disbelieve them both.'

SAY: Bring then a Book from before God which shall be a better guide than these, that I may follow it; if ye speak the truth. 48-9.

Here Muḥammad acknowledges that the books of Moses are inspired as well as the Qur'án.

Jews and Christians who became Muslims receive a double reward.

<sup>1</sup> Supply, *we will not believe* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, the Pentateuch and the Koran (J. M. R.).

They<sup>1</sup> to whom we gave the Scriptures before IT do in IT believe.

And when it is recited to them they say, 'We believe in it, for it is the truth from our Lord. We were Muslims before it came.'

Twice shall their reward be given them, for that they suffered with patience, and repelled evil with good, and gave alms out of that with which we provided them. 52-4.

It is pretended that formerly Jews and Christians held the doctrine of Islām. Those who became Muslims were to receive a double reward, as they accepted both the former scriptures and the Qur'án.

#### Story of Qárún.

And Korah went forth to his people in his pomp. Those who were greedy for this present life said, 'Oh that we had the like of that which hath been bestowed on Korah! Truly he is possessed of great good fortune.'

But they to whom knowledge had been given said, 'Woe to you! the reward of God is better for him who believeth and worketh righteousness, and none shall win it but those who have patiently endured.'

And we clave the earth for him and for his palace, and he had no forces, in the place of God, to help him, nor was he among those who are succoured 79-81.

Qárún is the Arabic name for Korah. In the legend Qárún has apparently been confused with

<sup>1</sup> The Meccan Jews and Christians who had formerly embraced Islam, and could now affirm that they had always held the same faith. This passage could not have been written after Muhammad's experience of Jewish unbelief at Medina (J. M. R.).

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Croesus, famous for his immense wealth. One Muslim writer says that forty mules were required to carry the keys of Qárûn. It is supposed that Muḥammad had in view a wealthy opposer of himself. See Numbers xvi for the true history.

### XXIX. SÚRATU'L-'ANKABÚT (THE SPIDER)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter derives its name from the mention of a spider. As in former chapters, the Quraish are likened to those who rejected Noah, Lot, and Moses, and would be destroyed. At this time Muḥammad had some Jewish converts. He accepted the Jewish Scriptures as inspired. When challenged to perform miracles, he declined to do so, alleging that the Qur'án was a sufficient miracle.

Idolatry likened to a spider's web.

The likeness for those who take to themselves guardians instead of God is the likeness of the SPIDER who buildeth her a house: But verily, frailest of all houses surely is the house of the spider. Did they but know this! 40.

The Jewish Scriptures and the Qur'án teach the same truth.

And say ye, 'We believe in what hath been sent down to us and hath been sent down to you. Our God and your God is one, and to him are we self-surrendered' (Muslims).

Thus have we sent down the Book of *the Koran* to thee: and they to whom we have given the Book of *the law* believe in it: and of these *Arabs* there are those who believe in it: and none, save the Infidels, reject our signs. 45-6.

This shows that Muhammad accepted the Jewish Scriptures.

Muhammad's inability to read or write a proof of the truth of the Qur'án.

Thou didst not recite any book (of revelation) before it: with that right hand of thine thou didst not transcribe one: else might they who treat it as a vain thing have justly doubted. 47.

Muslims generally think that Muhammad was unable to read or write at all, and for this reason the Qur'án is a miracle. From the words 'before it,' some understand that, although at first ignorant, he was now miraculously able to read and write.

The Qur'án a sufficient miracle.

But it is a clear sign in the hearts of those whom 'the knowledge' hath reached. None except the wicked reject our signs.

And they say, 'Unless a sign be sent down to him from his Lord. . . .' Say: Signs are in the power of God alone. I am only a plain spoken warner. 48-9.

### XXX. SÚRATU'R-RŪM (THE GREEKS)

#### *Mecca*

THIS chapter gets its name from the mention of the Greeks, by whom the Arabs meant the

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Eastern Roman empire, whose capital was Constantinople. The rest of the chapter treats of the folly of idolatry, proofs of God's power, goodness, the final judgement, etc.

The Greeks will overcome.

ELIF. LAM. MIM. THE GREEKS have been defeated.<sup>1</sup>

In a land hard by: But after their defeat they shall defeat their foes,

In a few years.<sup>2</sup> First and last is the affair with God. And on that day shall the faithful rejoice.

In the aid of their God: He aideth whom He will; and He is the Mighty, the Merciful. 1-4.

Muhammadans regard this passage as a wonderful prophecy, a proof that the Qur'ân really come down from heaven. In the year A.D. 616 the Persians conquered Syria from the Greeks, and next laid siege to Constantinople. In A.D. 625, however, the Greeks gained a signal victory over the Persians. There is nothing remarkable about

<sup>1</sup> By the Persians; probably in Palestine in the 6th year before the Hejira, under Khosrou Parviz. (Ann. 615. See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, ch. xlv.) The sympathies of Muhammad would naturally be enlisted on the side of the Christians rather than on that of the idolatrous fire worshippers, with whom Islam had nothing in common (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> This alludes to the defeat of the Persians by Heraclius, ann. 625. The Muhammadans appeal to this passage as a clear proof of the inspiration of their prophet. But it should be borne in mind that the vowel points of the consonants of the Arabic word for *defeated* in verse 1, not being originally written, and depending entirely on the speaker or reader, would make the prophecy true in either event, according as the verb received an active or passive sense in pronunciation. The whole passage was probably constructed with the view of its proving true in any event (J. M. R.).

this supposed prophecy which was given, as Rodwell shows, in a form to suit either result of the conflict. In every struggle between nations it is often easy to tell what will be the result.

Muhammad's inability to work miracles.

Thou canst not make the dead to hear, neither canst thou make the deaf to hear the call, when they withdraw and turn their backs:

Neither canst thou guide the blind out of their error: in sooth, none shalt thou make to hear, save him who shall believe in our signs: for they are resigned to our will (Muslims). 51-2.

Unbelievers and believers at the resurrection day.

And on the day whereon the Hour shall arrive, the wicked will swear.

That not above an hour have they waited: Even so did they utter lies *on earth*. 54-5.

Comparing their life on earth with eternity, the wicked will say that their time has not been above an hour.

### XXXI. SÚRATU LUQMAN (LUQMÁN)

#### *Mecca*

THIS chapter is named from the reference to Luqmán. As in the case of Alexander the Great in súra xviii, he is made a Muslim. He is generally identified with the Æsop of the Greeks, who was a deformed slave. Muhammad puts his own words into Luqmán's mouth.



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An unbeliever rebuked for his contempt of the Qur'án.

But a man there is<sup>1</sup> who buyeth an idle tale, that in his lack of knowledge he may mislead others from the way of God, and turn it to scorn. For such is prepared a shameful punishment!

And when our signs are rehearsed to him, he turneth away disdainfully, as though he heard them not—as though his ears were heavy with deafness. Announce to him therefore tidings of an afflictive punishment! 5-6.

An Arab recited some Persian stories to the Quraish as preferable to those in the Qur'án. Punishment is here threatened.

Luqmán's wisdom and advice.

Of old we bestowed wisdom upon LOKMAN, and taught him thus—'Be thankful to God: for whoever is thankful, is thankful to his own behoof; and if any shall be thankless . . . God truly is self-sufficient, worthy of all praise!'

And bear in mind when Lokman said to his son by way of warning, 'O my son! join not other gods with God, for the joining gods with God is the great impiety.' 11-12.

As mentioned above, Luqmán is made to teach the doctrines of Muḥammad.

<sup>1</sup> Nodhar Ibn El Hareth, who had purchased in Persia the romance of Roustem and Isfendiar, two of the most famous heroes of that land, which he recited to the Koreisch as superior to the Koran (J. M. R.). See also *The Historical Development of the Qur'án* (3rd. ed.) pp. 63-4.

## XXXII. SÚRATU'S-SAJDA (ADORATION)

*Mecca*

THE object of the chapter is to rebuke and warn the Quraish on account of their obstinate unbelief in the Qur'án. They are to be tormented in hell, with jinns and men.

The wicked will repent when it is too late.

Couldst thou but see when the guilty shall droop their heads before their Lord, *and cry*, 'O our Lord! we have seen and we have heard: return us then to life: we will do that which is right. Verily we believe firmly!'

(Had we pleased we had certainly given to every soul its guidance. But true shall be the word which hath gone forth from me—I will surely fill hell with Djinn and men together.)

'Taste then the recompense of your having forgotten the meeting with this your day. We, too, we have forgotten you: taste then an eternal punishment for that which ye have wrought.' 11-13.

## No escape from hell.

But as for those who grossly sin, their abode shall be the fire: so oft as they shall desire to escape out of it, back shall they be turned into it. And it shall be said to them, Taste ye the torment of the fire, which ye treated as a lie. 20.

## The book of the law given to Moses.

We heretofore gave the Book of the law to Moses: have thou no doubt as to our meeting with him:

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and we appointed it for the guidance of the children of Israel. 23.

Some understood by 'the guidance' the supposed meeting of Moses and Muḥammad during the night journey.

### XXXIII. SÚRATU'L-AḤZÁB

(THE CONFEDERATES)

#### *Madína*

THIS chapter takes its name from the confederate tribes who attacked Madína, and were repulsed at the battle of the Ditch. Part of the chapter treats of the conduct of the disaffected inhabitants of Madína, but the chief point of interest is the reference to Muḥammad's marriage with the divorced wife of Zaid, his adopted son.

Adopted sons not to be regarded as real sons.

God hath not given a man two hearts within him; neither hath he made your wives whom ye divorce to be as your mothers; nor hath he made your adopted sons to be as your own sons. Such words are indeed in your mouths; but God speaketh the truth, and in the right way He guideth. 4.

One Arab mode of divorce, when they were not to leave the house, was to say to his wife, 'Thou art henceforward to me as my mother,' and she became related as if so. Adopted sons were also regarded as real sons. Both customs are condemned.

## God's favour to Muslims at the Ditch.

O believers! <sup>1</sup> remember the goodness of God towards you, when the armies came against you, and we sent against them a blast, and hosts that ye saw not; for the eye of God was upon your doings:

When they assailed you from above you, and from below you, <sup>2</sup> and when your eyes became distracted, and your hearts came up into your throat, and ye thought diverse thoughts of God. 9-10.

The Quraish and Jews, to the number of 12,000 men, besieged Madīna. By the advice of a Persian, Muḥammad ordered a deep ditch to be dug around the city which he defended with 3,000 men. After a month a bitter cold east wind one night put out the fires of the confederates, overturned their tents, and put them into confusion, causing their flight. It is said that the angels also shouted 'Allāh akbar'—'God is great'!

## The slaughter of the Quraiza Jews.

And He caused those of the people of the Book (the Jews), who had aided *the confederates*, to come down

<sup>1</sup> Verses 9-33 have reference to the events of the year Hej. 5, towards the close. See next note. His. 688; Waq. 4 f. (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> In the engagement which took place under the walls of Medina, some of the enemy were posted on a height to the east of the city, others in a valley on the west. The besiegers were 12,000, the Muslims 3,000 strong, when a violent storm, which upset the tents, put out the camp fires, and blinded the eyes of the confederates with sand, turned the scale of victory against them. Muḥammad ascribes the storm to angelic agency (J. M. R.).

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out of their fortresses, and cast dismay into their hearts: some ye slew, others ye took prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

And He gave you their land, and their dwellings, and their wealth, for an heritage—even a land on which ye had never set foot: for the might of God is equal to all things. 26-7.

The Quraiza Jews, though in league with Muhammad, had assisted the Quraish at Madîna. After a siege of twenty-five days they capitulated. Sa'd a wounded chief, was asked to decide upon the fate of the captives. His judgement was that the men should be put to death, the women and children sold into slavery, and the spoil divided. Muhammad then said: 'The judgement of Sa'd is the judgement of the Lord pronounced on high from above the seventh heaven', and the men, numbering about 600, were put to death in cold blood.

Muhammad's permission to take Zaid's wife.

And, *remember*, when thou saidst to him unto whom God had shewn favour,<sup>2</sup> and to whom thou also hadst shewn favour, 'Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear God;' and thou didst hide in thy mind what God would bring to light,<sup>3</sup> and thou didst fear man; but

<sup>1</sup> After the siege of Medina had been raised, Muhammad made a successful expedition against the Jews of Koreidhâ, for their treason and violation of treaties (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> That is, to Zaid. The favour of God to Zaid consisted in having caused him to become a Muslim: the favour of Muhammad in adopting him as his son. Zaid and Abû Lahab (Sura cxi. p. 29) are the only contemporaries of Muhammad mentioned by name in the Koran (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> Thy plan to obtain Zeinab, or Zenobia, Zaid's wife, as thy wife (J. M. R.).

more right had it been to fear God. And when Zaid had settled concerning her to divorce her, we married her to thee, that it might not be a crime in the faithful to marry the wives of their adopted sons, when they have settled the affair concerning them. And the behest of God is to be performed.

No blame attacheth to the prophet where God hath given him a permission. Such was the way of God with those prophets who flourished before thee; for God's behest is a fixed decree. 37-8.

Muhammad, happening one day to visit the house of his adopted son Zaid, and not finding him at home, accidentally saw his wife Zainab unveiled. Smitten with her beauty, Muhammad exclaimed, 'Praise belongeth unto God who turneth the hearts of men even as He will.' These words were overheard by Zainab, who proud of her conquest, told her husband of it. Zaid went at once to Muhammad, and offered to divorce his wife for him. At first Muhammad refused, for it was a thing unheard of to marry the divorced wife of an adopted son: but Zaid carried out his proposal. Muhammad at last resolved to have her. Sitting by 'Āysha, he professed to have a revelation from God, and said, 'Who will run and tell Zainab that the Lord hath joined her to me in marriage?' Zainab was overjoyed, and gave the messenger all the jewels she had on her person.

The marriage caused great scandal, and to save his reputation, Muhammad sought to justify his conduct by affirming that it was done by God's

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command, as given in this chapter. Zainab afterwards used to vaunt herself as the one wife of Muḥammad who had been given in marriage by God himself.

Only two friends of Muḥammad are mentioned in the Qur'án, of whom Zaid is one, the other is Abú Lahab.

### Law of divorce.

O Believers! when ye marry believing women, and then divorce them before ye have consummated the marriage, ye have no term prescribed you, which ye must fulfil towards them: provide for them, and dismiss them with a reputable dismissal. 48.

If a wife is divorced before the marriage has been consummated, and no dower has been given, she is not bound to be kept any time, but may be dismissed with a present. If a woman had a dowry, this must be returned.

License granted to Muḥammad with regard to wives.

O Prophet! we allow thee thy wives whom thou hast dowered, and the slaves whom thy right hand possesseth out of the booty which God hath granted thee, and the daughters of thy uncle, and of thy paternal and maternal aunts who fled with thee to *Medina*, and any believing woman who hath given herself up to the Prophet, if the Prophet desired to wed her—a Privilege for thee above the rest of the Faithful. 49.

Other Muslims were not allowed to marry more than four wives. Muḥammad, it is said by the express command of God, was allowed to

take as many as he pleased ; he was also allowed to marry the daughters of his uncles and aunts which was forbidden in other cases. Verse fifty-two, which seems to contradict the above, is supposed to have been abrogated.

Muhammad's wives to be questioned from behind a curtain.

O Believers ! enter not into the houses of the Prophet,<sup>1</sup> save by his leave, for a meal, without waiting his time. When ye are invited then enter, and when ye have eaten then disperse at once.<sup>2</sup> And engage not in familiar talk, for this would cause the Prophet trouble, and he would be ashamed to bid you go ; but God is not ashamed to say the truth. And when ye would ask any gift of his wives, ask it from behind a veil. 58.

O Prophet ! speak to thy wives and to thy daughters, and to the wives of the Faithful, that they let their veils fall low. Thus will they more easily be known, and they will not be affronted. God is Indulgent, Merciful ! 59.

#### XXXIV. SÚRATU'S-SABÁ' (SABÁ')

##### *Mecca*

THIS chapter gets its name from the Sabá' country, to the south of Arabia, which is mentioned. The contents are nearly the same as

<sup>1</sup> Verses 53-55 refer to the conduct of the guests at Muhammad's house after his marriage with Zeinab. *Albuhari* passim. *Muslim* i. 824 ff. *Wah. Comp. Caussir*, iii. 151 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ullmann*, p. 263, quotes a similar precept from the *Talmud*, 'Do all that the master of the house biddeth, but wait not to be asked to depart' (J. M. R.).



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the preceding chapters. The Quraish are charged with accusing Muḥammad of forgery and madness. Only a few quotations, containing new matter, will be given.

The wonders of Solomon.

And unto Solomon *did we subject* the wind, which travelled in the morning a month's journey, and a month's journey in the evening. And we made a fountain of molten brass to flow for him. And of the Djinn were some who worked in his presence, by the will of his Lord; and such of them as swerved from our bidding will we cause to taste the torment of the flame.

They made for him whatever he pleased, of lofty halls, and images, and dishes large as tanks for watering camels, and cooking pots that stood firmly. 'Work,' said we, 'O family of David with thanksgiving: ' But few of my servants are the thankful!

And when we decreed the death of *Solomon*, nothing shewed them that he was dead but a reptile of the earth that gnawed the staff *which supported his corpse*. And when it fell, the Djinn perceived that if they had known the things unseen, they had not continued in this shameful affliction. 11-13.

The above are mere legends, foolish exaggerations. Muslim writers make them still more ridiculous. It is said that the fountain of molten brass was in the south of Arabia and flowed three days in a month; some of the lions whose images were made would stretch out their paws when Solomon sat down on his throne,

while eagles shaded him with their wings; the dishes were said to be so large that a thousand men might eat out of each of them at once! As Solomon perceived that he would die before the completion of the temple which jinns were building, he wished his death to be kept secret from them. He died as he stood at prayers, leaning on his staff which supported his body for a whole year. The jinns supposing him to be alive kept on working. At last worms ate through the staff, when the corpse fell, and discovered the king's death! There are no such fables in the Bible. Solomon lived twenty-five years after the temple was built.

#### The Punishment of Sabá'.

A sign there was to SABA, in their dwelling places: —two gardens, the one on the right hand and the other on the left: 'Eat ye of your Lord's supplies, and give thanks to him: Goodly is the country, and gracious is the Lord!'

But they turned aside: so we sent upon them the flood of Irem; and we changed them their gardens into two gardens of bitter fruit and tamarisk and some few jujube trees.

Such was our retribution on them for their ingratitude: but do we thus recompense any except the ungrateful?

And we placed between them and the cities which we have blessed, conspicuous cities, and we fixed easy stages: 'Travel ye through them by night and day, secure.'

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But they said, 'O Lord! make the distance between our journeys longer,'<sup>1</sup> and against themselves did they act unjustly: so we made them a tale, and scattered them with an utter scattering. Truly herein are signs to everyone that is patient, grateful. 14-19.

Sabá' was situated in the south of Arabia, thirty miles from Sana. It is supposed to have been the capital of Queen Balqis. On account of the wickedness of the people, a great reservoir of water, the work of the queen, burst and then occasioned terrible destruction. The gardens also produced only bitter fruit.

### XXXV. SÚRATU'L-FÁṬIR (THE CREATOR)

#### *Mecca*

THIS chapter derives its name from the mention of the Creator in the first verse. In character it is very like the preceding sūra.

Praise of God; angels His messengers.

Praise be to God, Maker of the Heavens and of the Earth! who employeth the Angels as envoys. 1.

Angels are said to have two, three or four pair of wings according to their orders. Muslim writers say that when Gabriel appeared to Muhammad he had six hundred wings!

<sup>1</sup> The *Saba* of verse 14 formed an important branch of the trading population of Yemen. This whole passage, 14-18, alludes to the cessation of traffic between them and Syria, which led to the desire to lengthen the stages and diminish the expense of the journey. See Muir's *Life of Muhammad*, i. p. cxxxix. Muhammad attributes this desire to covetousness (J. M. R.).

## The rewards of paradise.

Into the gardens of Eden shall they enter: with bracelets of gold and pearl shall they be decked therein, and therein shall their raiment be of silk:

And they shall say, 'Praise be to God who hath put away sorrow from us. Verily our Lord is Gracious, Grateful,

Who of His bounty hath placed us in a mansion that shall abide for ever: therein no toil shall reach us, and therein no weariness shall touch us.' 30-2

## XXXVI. SÚRATU YÁ SÍN (YÁ SÍN)

*Mecca*

THE above title is taken from the two mystic letters at the beginning. It is also called The 'heart of the Qur'án'. It is held in great esteem by Muslims, and is often read to the dying owing to its teaching of the resurrection.

Two apostles of Jesus sent to Antioch.

Set forth to them the instance of the people of the city<sup>1</sup> when the Sent Ones came to it.

When we sent two unto them and they charged them both with imposture—therefore with a third we strengthened them: and they said, 'Verily we are the Sent unto you of God.'

<sup>1</sup> Antioch, to which Jesus is said to have sent two disciples to preach the unity of God, and subsequently Simon Peter. This vague story, and that of the seven sleepers in Sura xviii, are the only traces to be found in the Koran of any knowledge, on the part of Muhammad, of the history of the Church subsequent to the day of Pentecost, or of the spread of the Christian religion (J. M. R.).

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They said, 'Ye are only men like us: Nought hath the God of Mercy sent down. Ye do nothing but lie.'

They said, 'Our Lord knoweth that we are surely sent unto you;

To proclaim a clear message is our only duty.'

They said, 'Of a truth we augur ill from you: if ye desist not we will surely stone you, and a grievous punishment will surely befall you from us.'

They said, 'Your augury of ill is with yourselves. Will ye be warned?'<sup>1</sup> Nay, ye are an erring people.'

Then from the end of the city a man came running<sup>2</sup>: He said, 'O my people! follow the Sent Ones;

Follow those who ask not of you a recompense, and who are rightly guided. 12-20.

Muslim writers say that the people of Antioch, being idolaters, Jesus Christ sent to them two of His disciples to preach to them, when Habib believed on account of the miracles they performed. The New Testament makes no such statement. Muhammad puts into the mouth of the people of Antioch what the Quraish said to himself.

The resurrection; happiness of believers.

And the trumpet shall be blown, and, lo! they shall speed out of their sepulchres to their Lord:

They shall say, 'Oh! woe to us! who hath roused us from our sleeping place?' 'Tis what the God of Mercy promised; and the Apostles spake the truth.'

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *if ye have been warned (will ye still disbelieve?)* (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Habib, the carpenter, who, as implied at verse 25, was martyred, and whose tomb at Antioch is still an object of veneration to the Muhammadans (J. M. R.).

But one blast shall there be,<sup>1</sup> and, lo! they shall be assembled before us, all together.

And on that day shall no soul be wronged in the least: neither shall ye be rewarded but as ye shall have wrought.

But joyous on that day shall be the inmates of Paradise, in their employ;

In shades, on bridal couches reclining, they and their spouses:

Therein shall they have fruits, and shall have whatever they require. 51-7.

God says, 'Be', and it is.

His command when He willeth aught is but to say to it BE and IT IS. 82.

The Arabic is *kun jayakúna*. Muslims believe that this shows the eternity of the Qur'án. Their argument is that God created the world by means of the word *Be*. If this word were created, then one created thing would have created another. To this it is replied that if *Be* is eternal, then there are two eternals. The power was not in the word, but in God.

### XXXVII. SÚRATU'S-ŞAFFÁT (THE RANKS)

#### *Mecca*

THIS chapter owes its title to the statement with which it begins. The subject matter resembles

<sup>1</sup> The Muhammadans affirm that a space of forty years will intervene between two blasts of the Trumpet. Maracci suggests that the idea of the two blasts is derived from 1 Thess. iv. 16, 'the voice of the archangel and . . . the trump of God' (J. M. R.).

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former chapters. Stories of Noah, Abraham, Moses and others, are repeated.

The happiness of Paradise.

And ye shall not be rewarded but as ye have wrought,  
Save the sincere servants of God!

A stated banquet shall they have  
Of fruits; and honoured shall they be  
In the gardens of delight,  
Upon couches face to face.

A cup shall be borne round among them from a  
fountain,

Limpid, delicious to those who drink;  
It shall not oppress the sense, nor shall they there-  
with be drunken.

And with them are the large-eyed ones with modest  
refraining glances, fair like the sheltered egg. 38-47.

The heaven of Muḥammad is a place of sensual  
delights, framed after his own heart.

The tree az-Zaqqúm described.

Is this the better repast or the tree ez-Zakkoum?

Verily, we have made it for a subject of discord to  
the wicked.

It is a tree which cometh up from the bottom of hell;  
Its fruits is as it were the heads of Satans;

And, lo! the *damned* shall surely eat of it and fill  
their bellies with it:

Then shall they have, thereon, a mixture of boiling  
water:

Then shall they return to hell. 60-6.

The Zaqqúm is a foreign tree which bears a  
very bitter fruit, the name of which is here  
used for the infernal tree. It was 'an occasion

of dispute with the unjust', who objected that a tree could not grow in hell where the stones themselves serve as fuel.

(Here follow accounts of Noah, Abraham, and others, similar to those already quoted.)

## XXXVIII. SŪRATU ŚĀD (ŚĀD)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter is so called from the Arabic letter with which it commences. Arabic commentators say that 'God only knows what He means by it'. The earlier part refers to Quraish confederates. Legends are afterwards given of Solomon and Job.

## Legends of Solomon.

And Solomon gave we unto David. An excellent servant, for he loved to turn him Godward.

*Remember* when at eventide the prancing chargers were displayed before him,

And he said, 'Truly I have loved the love of earthly goods above the remembrance of my Lord, till the sun hath been hidden by the veil of darkness.

Bring them back to me.' And he began to sever the legs and necks.

We also made trial of Solomon, and placed a phantom on his throne: whereupon he returned *to Us* (in penitence).

He said, O my Lord! pardon me, and give me a dominion that may not be to any one beside me, for thou art the liberal giver.

So we subjected the wind to him; it ran softly at his bidding, whithersoever he directed it:



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And the Satans—every builder and diver—

And others bound in chains :

‘This,’ said we, ‘is our gift: be bounteous then, or withhold thy favours; no account shalt thou render.’

And his rank also is high with Us, and an excellent retreat. 29-39.

The legend about the horses is that one day Solomon was so taken up with them that he forgot the hour of evening prayer. He was so grieved that he ordered them all to be brought and killed except a hundred. God recompensed him by giving him dominion over the wind.

The counterfeit body of Solomon is from a Jewish legend. Solomon married the daughter of the king of Sidon. She so mourned for her father, that Solomon commanded, the devils to make an image of him which his daughter worshipped. To punish him, a devil obtained possession of his ring, engraved with the Holy Name. With this the devil personated Solomon, who wandered about unknown forty days—the time the idol was worshipped. After this the devil flew away and threw the ring into the sea, where it was swallowed by a fish, which was afterwards caught and brought to Solomon, who thus recovered his kingdom.

### Legend of Job.

And remember our servant Job when he cried to his Lord, ‘Verily, Satan hath laid on me disease and pain.’

‘Stamp,’ said we. ‘with thy foot. This is to wash with; cool, and to drink.’

And we gave him back his family, and as many more with them in our mercy; and for a monition to men of judgment.

And *we said*, 'Take in thine hand a rod, and strike<sup>1</sup> with it, nor break thine oath.' Verily, we found him patient!

How excellent a servant, one who turned to Us was he! 40-5.

The story of Iblis revealed to Muhammad by God.

Yet had I no knowledge of *what passed* among the celestial chiefs when they disputed,<sup>2</sup>

—Verily, it hath been revealed to me only because I am a public preacher—

When thy Lord said to the angels, 'I am about to make man of clay,

And when I have formed him and breathed my spirit into him, then worshipping fall down before him.'

And the angels prostrated themselves, all of them with one accord,

Save Eblis. He swelled with pride, and became an unbeliever. 69-74.

The legend of Iblis refusing to worship Adam is also related in *Súratu'l-Áraf* (vii) 11-19. Here Muhammad expressly declares that it was revealed to him by God.

<sup>1</sup> Thy wife;—on whom he had sworn that he would inflict an hundred blows, because she had absented herself from him when in need of her assistance, or for her words (*Job* ii. 9). The oath was kept, we are told, by his giving her one blow with a rod of a hundred stalks. This passage is often quoted by the Muslims as authorising any similar manner of release from an oath inconsiderately taken (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> About the creation of man (J. M. R.).

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### XXXIX. SÚRATU'Z-ZUMAR (THE TROOPS)

#### *Mecca*

THE title is given because the chapter states that Muslims and infidels would be conducted to heaven and hell 'by troops.' The chief other point is the repeated claim of Muḥammad to have received the Qur'án to exhibit 'the pure religion' of God.

Muḥammad exhibits the pure religion and is the first Muslim.

SAY: I am bidden to serve God with a sincere worship: and I am bidden to be the first of those who surrender themselves to him (Muslims). 14.

The Qur'án claims to be consistent.

The best of recitals hath God sent down—a book in unison with itself, and teaching by iteration. The very skins of those who fear their Lord do creep at it! Then do their skins and their hearts soften at the remembrance of their Lord! This is God's guidance: by it will He guide whom He pleaseth; and, whom God shall mislead, no guide shall there be for him. 24.

So far from being in 'unison with itself' the Qur'án contains numerous contradictions. Besides single passages, the Mecca súras inculcate forbearance and kindness, while the Madína súras breathe intolerance and bloodshed. The term *mathání*, translated by Rodwell as 'by iteration' is a peculiar one. Rabbi Geiger considers that the

perplexity about is due to its Hebrew source being overlooked. For a full discussion of its meaning see, *The Historical Development of the Qur'ān*, pp. 60-2.

Troops of unbelievers and believers.

And by TROOPS shall the unbelievers be driven towards Hell, until when they reach it, its gates shall be opened, and its keepers shall say to them, 'Come not apostles from among yourselves to you reciting to you the signs of your Lord, and warning you of the meeting with Him on this your day?' They shall say, 'Yes'. But just is the sentence of punishment on the unbelievers.

It shall be said to them, 'Enter ye the gates of Hell, therein to dwell for ever;' and wretched the abode of the arrogant!

But those who feared their Lord shall be driven on by troops to Paradise, until when they reach it, its gates shall be opened, and its keepers shall say to them, 'All hail! virtuous have ye been: enter then in, to abide herein for ever.'

And they shall say, 'Praise be to God, who hath made good to us His promise, and hath given to us the earth as our heritage, that we may dwell in Paradise wherever we please!' And goodly is the reward of those who travailed *virtuously*. 71-4.

## XL. SŪRATUL-MŪ'MIN (THE TRUE BELIEVER)

### *Mecca*

THE title is taken from verse twenty-nine where mention is made of a man who was a true believer.

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The condition of the confederates against Muḥammad is described as prosperous. He is called a liar, sorcerer, and impostor, like former prophets.

Infidels will, in vain, repent in hell.

They shall say, 'Twice, O our Lord, hast thou given us death, and twice hast thou given us life and we acknowledge our sins: is there no way to escape?'

'This hath befallen you, for that when One God was proclaimed to you, ye believed not: but when partners had been united with him, ye believed: But judgment belongeth unto God, the High, the Great.' 11-12.

This refers to the absence of life before birth and the deprivation of it at death and to the being quickened at birth and raised again after death.

Joseph said to be a prophet to the Egyptians.

Moreover, Joseph had come to you before with clear tokens, but ye ceased not to doubt of the message with which he came to you, until when he died, ye said, 'God will by no means raise up an apostle after him.' Thus God misleadeth him who is the transgressor, the doubter. 36.

Joseph is here represented as a prophet to the Egyptians and a worker of miracles, yet they disbelieved him as the Quraish did Muḥammad.

Moses received the book of the Law.

Of old gave we Moses the guidance, and we made the children of Israel the heritors of the Book—a guidance and a warning to men endued with understanding. 56.

Muhammad here acknowledges that the book of Moses was given by God.

Histories of the prophets related by God to Muhammad.

And we have\* already sent apostles before thee: of some we have told thee, and of others we have told thee nothing: <sup>1</sup> but no apostle had the power to work a miracle unless by the leave of God. 78.

Muhammad claims that all the legends of the apostles in the Qur'an were revealed to him by God Himself.

## XLI. SÚRATU'L-FUṢṢILAT (EXPLANATION)

### *Mecca*

THE contents of this chapter are much the same as the preceding.

Unbelievers scoffed at the reading of the Qur'an.

Ye the unbelievers say; 'Hearken not to this Koran, but keep up a talking, that ye may overpower *the voice of the reader.*' 25.

This is what Muslims sometimes do when the gospel is preached to them.

Why the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic.

Had we made it a Koran in a foreign tongue, they had surely said, 'Unless its signs be made clear . . . !

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that Muhammad, conscious of his ignorance of Jewish history, intends in this verse to screen himself from the charge of passing over the histories of many of their prophets (J. M. R.).

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What! in a foreign tongue? and the people Arabian?'  
SAY: It is to those who believe a guide and a medicine;  
but as to those who believe not, there is a thickness  
in their ears, and to them it is a blindness: they are  
*like* those who are called to from afar. 44.

### XLII. SÚRATU'SH-SHÚRÁ (COUNSEL)<sup>1</sup>

#### *Mecca*

THE chapter receives its name from the word 'counsel' which occurs in verse thirty-six. Muhammad tries to establish his claims to be a prophet and seeks to show that the Qur'án was not forged.

The inspiration of the Bible like that of the Qur'án.

HA. MIM. AIN. SIN. KAF. Thus unto thee as unto those who preceded thee doth God, the Mighty, the Wise, reveal! 1.

The Jewish and Christian Scriptures are here said to have been revealed in the same manner as the Qur'án, and are therefore entitled to equal reverence.

Islám the religion of all the former prophets.

To you hath He prescribed the faith which He commanded unto Noah, and which we have revealed to thee, and which we commanded unto Abáham and Moses and Jesus, saying, 'Observe this faith, and be not divided into sects therein.' Intolerant to those who worship idols jointly with God. 11.

<sup>1</sup> This Súra is sometimes called súratu HÁ Mím as-Sajda.

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The great differences between Islám and Christianity disprove this assertion.

Character of true believers.

And who hearken to their Lord, and observe prayer, and whose affairs are guided by mutual COUNSEL, and who give alms of that with which we have enriched them. 36.

How God reveals Himself.

It is not for man that God should speak with him but by vision, or from behind a veil:

Or, He sendeth a messenger to reveal, by his permission, what He will: for He is Exalted, Wise!

Thus have we sent the Spirit (Gabriel<sup>1</sup>) to thee with a revelation, by our command. 50-2.

This was to answer those who objected that no man ever saw Muḥammad when receiving his revelation from God.

### XLIII. SÚRATU'Z-ZUKĪRUF (THE ORNAMENTS OF GOLD)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter is probably named from the mention of 'ornaments of gold' in verse thirty-four. Muḥammad seems to have despaired of the conversion of the Quraish. 'They have ears but hear not.'

<sup>1</sup> Thus Beidhawi (J. M. R.).



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The Arabic Qur'án said to be copied from a divine original.

HA. MIM. By the Luminous Book!

We have made it an Arabic Koran that ye may understand:

And it is a transcript of the archetypal Book,<sup>1</sup> kept by us; it is lofty, filled with wisdom. 1-3.

Following the idolatry of forefathers no excuse.

But say they: 'Verily we found our fathers of that persuasion; and verily, by their footsteps do we guide ourselves.'

And thus never before thy time did we send a warner to any city but its wealthy ones said: 'Verily we found our fathers with a religion, and in their tracks we tread.'

SAY, *such was our command to that apostle—*'What! even if I bring you a religion more right than that ye found your fathers following?' And they said, 'Verily we believe not in your message.' 21-3.

God has given men reason, and they ought not to follow the religion of their forefathers without inquiry.

The excuse that the Qur'án was not sent to some great man.

And they say, 'Had but this Koran been sent down to some *great* one of the two cities<sup>2</sup> . . .!' 30.

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *it is in the Mother of the Book*, i.e. the original of the Koran, preserved before God (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Supply, *Mecca and Taief, we would have received it* (J. M. R.).

The wicked in hell ask in vain for annihilation.

And they shall cry: 'O Malec! would that thy Lord would make an end of us!' He saith: 'Here must ye remain.' 76.

Muslims suppose Málik to be the name of the principal angel who has charge over hell, and presides over the tortures of the damned.

XLIV. SÚRATU'D-DUKHÁN (SMOKE)

*Mecca*

THIS title is found in verse nine where smoke is mentioned. Unbelievers are warned of coming vengeance. The joys of Paradise and the torments of hell are mentioned.

The Qur'án sent down on a blessed night.

HA. MIM.' By this clear Book!

See! on a blessed night have we sent it down, for we would warn *mankind*:

On the night wherein all things are disposed in wisdom. 1-3.

The Muslims believe that a copy of the Qur'án, from the original in heaven, was by Gabriel sent down to the lowest heaven on the night of power, between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth of Ramaḍán.

XLV. SÚRATU'L-JÁTHIYA (KNEELING)

*Mecca*

THE title is derived from verse twenty-seven. In character it resembles the preceding chapters.

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### The Scriptures given to the Jews.

To the children of Israel gave we of old the Book and the Wisdom, and the gift of Prophecy, and we supplied them with good things, and privileged them above all peoples:

And we gave them clear sanctions for our behests: neither did they differ, through mutual envy, till after they had become possessed of knowledge; but thy Lord will judge between them on the day of resurrection, as to the subject of their disputes. 15-16.

The Jewish Scriptures are acknowledged as the Word of God, preceding in date the Qur'án.

At the last day every nation will be kneeling.

And thou shalt see every nation KNEELING: to its own book shall every nation be summoned: 'This day shall ye be repaid as ye have wrought. 27.

## XLVI. SÚRATU'L-AḤQÁF' (THE SANDHILL)

### *Mecca*

THE chapter gets its name from the dwelling place of the 'Adites, meaning sands which lie in a winding manner. The people of Mecca are warned against impending judgements.

Jewish believers and disbelievers of the Qur'án.

SAY: What think ye? If *this Book* be from God, and ye believe it not, and a witness of the children of Israel witness to its conformity *with the Law*, and believe, while ye proudly disdain it . . . ? Ah! God guideth not the people guilty of such a wrong!

But the infidels say of the believers, 'If it were a good *Book* they would not have been before us in believing it.' And not having submitted to guidance, they proceed to say, 'It is an old lying legend!' 9-10.

This 'witness' is supposed to be the Jew, 'Abdu'lláh ibn Salma, who declared that Muḥammad was the prophet foretold by Moses. Other Jews called the Qur'án an old lying legend'.

Húd warned the people of al-Aḥqáf of impending destruction.

Remember, too, the brother of Ad when he warned his people in AL AḤKAF—and before and since his time there have been warners—'Worship none but God: verily I fear for you the punishment of the great day.'

They said, 'Art thou come to us to turn us away from our Gods? Bring on us now the woes which thou threatenest if thou speakest truth.'

'That knowledge,' said he, 'is with God alone: I only proclaim to you the message with which I am sent. But I perceive that ye are a people sunk in ignorance.'

So when they saw a cloud coming straight for their valleys, they said, 'It is a passing cloud that shall give us rain.' 'Nay, it is that whose speedy coming ye challenged—a blast wherein is an afflictive punishment. 20-4.

The 'brother of 'Ád' was the prophet Húd. A pestilential wind is said to have killed all the 'Ádites who did not believe the doctrine of Húd, and destroyed their possessions.

XLVII. SÚRATU MUḤAMMAD (MUḤAMMAD)

*Madína*

\* THE spirit of this Madína súra is very different from those revealed at Mecca, which inculcate peace and forbearance. Cowards and hypocrites are now threatened with the horrors of hell, while joys are set before the faithful who fight the battles of the Lord.

How enemies of Islám are to be treated in war.

When ye encounter the infidels,<sup>1</sup> strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them, and of the rest make fast the fetters.

And afterwards let there either be free dismissals or ransomings, till the war hath laid down its burdens. 4-5.

The Persians and some others hold that all the men taken in battle are to be slain unless they embrace Islám. Those taken after the battle are not to be slain, but may be set at liberty, or set free by ransom or sold as slaves.

God will reward those who fight for Islám.

And whoso fight for the cause of God, their works he will not suffer to miscarry;

He will vouchsafe them guidance, and dispose their hearts aright;

<sup>1</sup> The Meccans and other unbelievers of Muhammad's time. The Hanefites suppose this law to apply only to the battle of Bedr. The Shiites take it as of universal obligation (J. M. R.).

And he will bring them into the Paradise, of which he hath told them. 5-7.

Muhammad told to ask pardon for his sin.

Know, then, that there is no god but God: and ask pardon for thy sin, and for believers, both men and women. 21.

Here and elsewhere Muhammad acknowledges himself to be a sinner, although some Muhammadans claim that he was sinless. A tradition attributes to him the saying, 'I ask pardon of God a hundred times a day.'

## XLVIII. SÚRATU'L-FATHI (VICTORY)

### *Madīna*

THE chapter takes its name from the statement in the first verse. The victory may refer to Khaibar and to the treaty with the people of Mecca, which was in reality a victory.

Muhammad's sin to be forgiven.

VERILY, We have won for thee an undoubted VICTORY<sup>1</sup>—

*In token that God forgiveth thy earlier and later faults, and fulfilleth His goodness to thee, and guideth thee on the right way. 1-2.*

<sup>1</sup> This Sura was probably revealed shortly after the peace of Hudaibiya. Ann. Hej. 6. Some commentators, however, understand the *Victory* of the taking of Mecca two years later—the preterite being used in the prophetic style for the future—others, of the taking of Khaibar, or Muta, a town of the Roman empire (J. M. R.).

## 192 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÂN

Some suppose this means the sins committed by Muḥammad before and after his call; others refer to his conduct with the Coptic Mary and his marriage with the wife of his adopted son.

Burning fire for unbelievers in God and Muḥammad.

For, whoso believeth not in God, and His Apostle. . . .  
Verily, we have got ready the flame for the Infidels! 13.

Spoils given and more promised.

Well pleased now hath God been with the believers when they plighted fealty to thee under the tree;<sup>1</sup> and He knew what was in their hearts: therefore did He send down upon them a spirit of secure repose, and rewarded them with a speedy victory.

And with the rich booty which they took: for God is Mighty, Wise!

God promised you the taking of a rich booty and sped it to you; and He withheld men's hands from you, for a sign to the faithful, and that He might guide you along the right way:—

And other booty, over which ye have not yet had power: but now hath God compassed them for you; for God is over all things Potent. 18-21.

The conquest of Mecca a proof of Muḥammad's mission.

Now hath God in truth made good to His Apostle the dream *in which he said*, 'Ye shall surely enter the

<sup>1</sup> When the rumour reached Muhammad at Hudaibiya that Othman Ibn Affan, whom he had sent to inform the Meccans that he was merely coming to visit their temple, and with peaceable intentions, had been slain by them (J. M. R.).

## XLIX. THE INNER APARTMENTS 193

sacred Mosque, if God will, in full security, having your heads shaved and your hair cut: ye shall not fear; for He knoweth what ye know not; and He hath ordained you, beside this, a speedy victory.' 27.

Muhammad had a dream at Madína that he and his companions entered Mecca with their heads shaved or their hair cut. This dream was fulfilled.

## XLIX. SÚRATU'L-HUJURÁT (THE INNER APARTMENTS) •

### *Mecca*

THE chapter receives its name from words in verse four. The Muslims are rebuked for different faults.

The respect to be shown to Muhammad.

O Believers! raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, neither speak loud to him as ye speak loud one to another, lest your works come to nought, and ye unaware of it.

They who lower their voices in the presence of the Apostle of God, are the persons whose hearts God hath inclined to piety. Forgiveness shall be theirs and a rich reward.

They who call out to thee while thou art within thine APARTMENTS, have most of them no right perception of *what is due to thee*.

But if they wait patiently till thou come forth to them, it were far better for them. But God is Indulgent, Merciful. 2-5.



## 194 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

The first command was given on account of Abú Bakr and 'Umar disputing loudly before Muḥammad. Others called to him when he was sleeping at noon in his inner apartment to come forth.

### L. SÚRATU'L-QÁF (QÁF)

#### *Mecca*

THE letter placed at the beginning of the chapter, the meaning of which is disputed, has been chosen as its title. It begins with a term often applied to the Qur'án, al-Majíd, the glorious. In character it resembles other Meccan chapters.

Angels record all human thoughts and actions.

When the two *angels* charged with taking account shall take it, one sitting on the right hand, the other on the left:

Not a word doth he utter, but there is a watcher with him ready to note it down. 16-17.

It is said that one angel writes down a man's good actions, and the other his evil deeds.

Two angels condemn unbelievers at the day of judgement.

And every soul shall come—an *angel* with it urging it along, and an *angel* to witness against it<sup>1</sup>—

*Saith he.* 'Of this day didst thou live in heedlessness: but we have taken off thy veil from thee, and thy sight is becoming sharp this day.'

<sup>1</sup> Lit. a driver and a witness (J. M. R.).

And he who is at this side<sup>1</sup> shall say, 'This is what I am prepared with against thee.' 20-2.

One angel will bring every person before the tribunal, and the other will act as a witness.

# LI. SÚRATU'DH-BHÁRAYAT (THE DISPERSING)

## *Mecca*

THE name is given from a word in the first verse. Muḥammad<sup>1</sup> was rejected, like other prophets, and called a magician or madman.

Muḥammad told to withdraw from Mecca.

Turn away, then, from them, and thou shalt not incur reproach :

Yet warn them, for, in truth, warning will profit the believers. 54-5.

The people of Mecca were obstinate unbelievers, charging Muḥammad with being a magician or madman. The Meccans had also determined upon his death. He therefore fled to Madína in A.D. 622 the date from which Muslims reckon.

# LII. SÚRATU'T-TÚR (THE MOUNTAIN)

## *Mecca*

THE chapter is probably named from the mention of a mountain in the first verse. The

<sup>1</sup> The Satan who is chained to him. Sura xli. 24 (J. M. R.).

## 196 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Quraish have become more violent, and plotted the destruction of Muḥammad.

Oaths by Mount Sinai and other things.

By the MOUNTAIN,  
And by the Book written  
On an outspread roll,  
And by the frequented fane,  
And by the lofty vault,  
And by the swollen sea,  
Verily, a chastisement from thy Lord is imminent,  
And none shall put it back. 1-8.

The 'outspread roll' is differently explained; the 'frequented fane' is generally supposed to mean the Ka'ba. By all these oaths the Quraish are assured that punishment would descend.

A plot against Muḥammad.

Desire they to lay snares for thee? But the snared ones shall be they who do not believe. 42.

### LIII. SÚRATU'N-NAJM (THE STAR)

#### *Mecca*

THE chapter is named from the word star in the first verse. The Qur'án is asserted to be the word of God and not of Muḥammad, and a description is given of the visits from angels which Muḥammad received.

Oath by the star.

By the STAR when it setteth,  
Your compatriot erreth not, nor is he led astray,  
Neither speaketh he from mere impulse.

The *Koran* is no other than a revelation revealed to him. 1-4.

God here swears by a star that Muḥammad is not deceived, and does not speak his own words; the Qur'án is direct from God.

Muḥammad's intercourse with angels.

One terrible in power taught it him,  
Endued with wisdom. With even balance stood he  
In the highest part of the horizon :  
Then came he nearer and approached,  
And was at the distance of two bows, or even closer—  
And he revealed to his servant what he revealed.  
His heart falsified not what he saw.  
What! will ye then dispute with him as to what he saw?  
He had seen him also another time,  
Near the Sidrah-tree, which marks the boundary.<sup>1</sup>  
Near which is the garden of repose.  
When the Sidrah-tree was covered with what covered it,  
His eye turned not aside, nor did it wander.  
For he saw the greatest of the signs of his Lord. 5-18.

'One terrible in power' is the angel Gabriel, who is said to have taught Muḥammad the Qur'án. He came so near him that he was less than the

<sup>1</sup> That is, Beyond which neither men nor angels can pass (Djelai). The original word is also rendered, the *Lotus-Tree of the extremity*, or of the loftiest spot in Paradise, in the seventh Heaven, on the right hand of the throne of God. Its leaves are fabled to be as numerous as the members of the whole human family, and each leaf to bear the name of an individual. This tree is shaken on the night of the 15th of Ramadan every year a little after sunset, when the leaves on which are inscribed the names of those who are to die in the ensuing year fall, either wholly withered, or with more or less green remaining, according to the months or weeks the person has yet to live (J. M. R.).

## 198 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

distance of two bow's length. He is also said to have seen him at another time standing by the lote-tree in the seventh heaven, on the right hand of the throne of God.

Three idols of the ancient Arabs.

Do you see Al-Lat and Al-Ozza,<sup>1</sup>

And Manat the third idol besides? <sup>2</sup>

What? shall ye have male progeny and God female?

This were indeed an unfair partition!

These are mere names: ye and your fathers named them thus. 19-24.

Al-Lát was the idol of the tribe of Thakíf. The name is supposed to mean *the goddess*. Al-'Uzzá was, it is said, an idol of the Quraish. The name means the *most mighty*. Manát was a large stone. The name means to *flow*, from

<sup>1</sup> Al-Lat or El-Lat, probably the Alilat of Herodotus (iii. 8) was an idol at Nakhlah, a place east of the present site of Mecca. Al-Ozza was an idol of the Kinanah tribe; but its hereditary priests were the Banu Solaym, who were stationed along the mercantile road to Syria in the neighbourhood of Chaibar (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> When at the first recital of this Sura, the prophet had reached this verse, he continued,

These are the exalted females, [or, sublime swans, i.e. mounting nearer and nearer to God]

And truly their intercession may be expected.

These words, however, which were received by the idolaters with great exultation, were disowned by Muhammad in the course of a few days as a Satanic suggestion, and replaced by the text as it now stands. The probability is that the difficulties of his position led him to attempt a compromise of which he speedily repented. In the Suras subsequent to this period the denunciations of idolatry become much sterner and clearer. The authorities are given by Weil, Sprenger and Muir. See Sura [lxvii.] xvii. 74-76 (J. M. R.).

the flowing of the blood of the victims offered to it. Five other idols are mentioned in sūra lxxi. 22.

It is said that one day, while Muḥammad recited the above words, he added 'These are the exalted females and verily their intercession is to be hoped for.' Next day he recanted, saying that Satan had put these words in his mouth, and gave the passage as it now stands.<sup>1</sup>

Command to worship God.

Prostrate yourselves then to God and worship. 62.

At this verse, the Quraish, who were present at the first reading of this chapter, when their gods were well spoken of, fell down adoring, along with Muḥammad.

#### LIV. SŪRATU'L-QAMAR (THE MOON)

##### *Mecca*

THIS chapter owes its title to the statement in the first verse that the 'moon will be split as a sign of the day of judgement. The stories of the destruction of other nations who had rejected their prophets are briefly narrated, and the Quraish are warned from their fate.

The split moon.

THE hour hath approached and the MOON hath been cleft:

<sup>1</sup> See, *The Historical Development of the Qur'ān*, (3rd ed.), pp. 37-41 for fuller details.

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But whenever they see a miracle they turn aside and say, This is well-devised magic. 1-2.

A tradition refers this to a miracle; the unbelievers having asked for a sign, the moon appeared cloven in twain. This, however, is opposed to the direct teaching of the Qur'án elsewhere, in which the power to comply with the demand for a sign is always distinctly disclaimed. The usual explanation is the natural one, that the expression merely refers to one of the signs of the day of judgement.

Destruction of the 'Ádites.

The Adites called the truth a lie: but how great was my vengeance and my menace;

For we sent against them a roaring wind in a day of continued distress:

It tore men away as though they were uprooted palm stumps.

And how great was my vengeance and my menace!

Easy for warning have we made the Koran—but, is there any one who receives the warning? 18-22.

It is said that when the 'Ádites sought shelter in the clefts of the rocks and in pits, holding fast by one another, that the wind tore them away and threw them down dead. The last verse is repeated after the notice of each prophet.

God's commands instantly executed.

All things have we created after a fixed decree:

Our command was but one word, swift as the twinkling of an eye. 49-50.

## LV. SÚRATU'R-RAHMÁN (THE MERCIFUL)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter, as indicated by the name given to God in the first verse from which it receives its title, is a psalm of praise. It is one of the most popular chapters of the Qur'án from its sensual description of heaven and the kind of chorus repeated: 'Which then of the bounties of, your Lord will ye twain deny?' This is omitted in the quotations after the first.

God taught the Qur'án to Muḥammad.

THE God of MERCY hath taught the Koran. 1.

## Description of the Muslim heaven.

But for those who dread the majesty of their Lord shall be two gardens:

Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye twain<sup>1</sup> deny?

With o'erbranching trees in each:

Which, etc.

In each two fountains flowing:

Which, etc.

In each two kinds of every fruit:

Which, etc.

On couches with linings of brocade shall they recline, and the fruit of the two gardens shall be within easy reach:

Which, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Men and djinn. The verb is in the dual (J. M. R.).



## 202 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÂN

Therein shall be the damsels with retiring glances,  
whom nor man nor djinn hath touched before them :

Which, etc.

Like jacynth and pearls :

Which, etc.

Shall the reward of good be aught but good ?

Which, etc.

And beside these shall be two other gardens :<sup>1</sup>

Which, etc.

Of a dark green :

Which, etc.

With gushing fountains in each :

Which, etc.

In each fruits and the palm and the pomegranate :

Which, etc.

In each, the fair, the beauteous ones :

Which, etc.

With large dark eyeballs, kept close in their pavilions :

Which, etc.

Whom man hath never touched, nor any djinn :<sup>2</sup>

Which, etc.

*Their spouses* on soft green cushions and on beautiful carpets shall recline :

Which, etc.

<sup>1</sup> One for men, the other for the Genii ; or, two for each man and Genius ; or, both are for the inferior classes of Muslims. Beidh. (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> It should be remarked that these promises of the Houris of Paradise are almost exclusively to be found in Suras written at a time when Muhammad had only a single wife of 60 years of age, and that in all the ten years subsequent to the Hejira, women are only twice mentioned as part of the reward of the faithful. Suras ii. 23 and iv. 60. While in Suras xxxvi. 56 ; xliii. 70 ; xlii. 23 ; xl. 8 the proper *wives* of the faithful are spoken of as accompanying their husbands into the gardens of bliss (J. M. R.).

Blessed be the name of thy Lord, full of majesty and glory. 44-78.

Four gardens are mentioned. Some suppose that the first two are for men and jinns of a higher order, and the other two for those of an inferior character.

## LVI. SÚRATU'L-WÁQI'Á (THE INEVITABLE)

*Mecca*

THE chapter takes its title from the first verse. It describes the rewards of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked at the day of judgement; and lastly shows the possibility of the resurrection of the dead.

The coming of the day of judgement inevitable.

WHEN the day that must come shall have come suddenly,

None shall treat that sudden coming as a lie. 1-2.

## Description of Paradise.

And they who were foremost *on earth*—the foremost still.<sup>1</sup>

These are they who shall be brought nigh to God.

In gardens of delight;

A crowd of the former

And few of the latter generations;

On inwrought couches

Reclining on them face to face:

<sup>1</sup> Lit., *the preceders, the preceders* (J. M. R.).

## 204 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Aye-blooming youths go round about to them  
 With goblets and ewers and a cup of flowing wine;  
 Their brows ache not from it, nor fails the sense:  
 And with such fruits as shall please them best,  
 And with flesh of such birds, as they shall long for:  
 And theirs shall be the Houris, with large dark eyes,  
 like pearls hidden in their shells. 10-20.

Oath by the stars that the Qur'án is inspired.

It needs not that I swear by the setting of the stars,  
 And it is a great oath, if ye knew it,  
 That this is the honourable Koran,  
 Written in the preserved Book.<sup>1</sup> 14-17.

### LVII. SÚRATU'L-HADÍD (IRON)

#### *Madína*

THIS chapter takes its name from the mention of iron in verse twenty-five. Muslims are urged to contribute for the spread of their faith; the rewards of the faithful and punishment of the wicked; apostles sent to former nations.

God omniscient and omnipresent.

ALL that is in the Heavens and in the Earth praiseth  
 God, and He is the Mighty. the Wise!

His the Kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth;  
 He maketh alive and killeth; and He hath power over  
 all things!

He is the first and the last; the Seen and the Hidden;<sup>2</sup>  
 and He knoweth all things! 1-2.

<sup>1</sup> That is, The Prototype of the Koran written down in the Book kept by God himself (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *the exterior and the interior* (J. M. R.).

Apostles sent to former nations.

We have sent our apostles with the clear tokens, and we have caused the Book and the balance to descend with them, that men might observe fairness. And we have sent down IRON. Dire evil resideth in it, as well as advantage, to mankind! God would know who will assist Him and his apostle in secret. Verily, God is Powerful, Strong.

And of old sent we Noah and Abraham, and on their seed conferred the gift of prophecy, and the Book; and some of them we guided aright: but many were evil doers.

Then we caused our apostles to follow in their footsteps; and we caused Jesus the son of Mary to follow them; and we gave him the Evangel.<sup>1</sup> 25-7.

‘Balance’ may mean a rule of justice, but some think it was an actual balance. ‘We have sent down iron’, means we taught men how to dig it out of mines. The Old Testament and the Gospel are here acknowledged to have been given by God.

# LVIII. SŪRATU’L-MUJĀDALA (SHE WHO DISPUTED)

*Madīna*

THIS title is taken from the first verse. This chapter is addressed entirely to Muslims. Respect

<sup>1</sup> We are not to understand by the word Evangel the actual volume of the New Testament, or any one of its component parts, but rather the revelation made to Jesus by God himself, which Muhammad may have imagined to have been committed to writing subsequently, in the same way as his own Koran (J. M. R.).

to Muḥammad commanded; Muslims to separate themselves from unbelievers, 'the party of the devil'.

God knoweth all things.

Dost thou not see that God knoweth all that is in the Heavens and all that is in the Earth? Three persons speak not privately together, but He is their fourth; nor five, but He is their sixth; nor fewer nor more, but wherever they be He is with them. Then on the day of resurrection He will tell them of their deeds: for God knoweth all things. 8.

Punishment for treating Muḥammad with disrespect.

Hast thou not marked those who have been forbidden secret talk, and return to what they have been forbidden, and talk privately together with wickedness, and hate, and disobedience towards the Apostle? And when they come to thee, they greet thee not as God greeteth thee:<sup>1</sup> and they say among themselves, 'Why doth not God punish us for what we say?' Hell shall be their meed:<sup>2</sup> they shall be burned at its fire: and a wretched passage *thither*! 9.

Instead of saying 'Peace be upon thee', they said 'Mischief on thee'.

Rewards for showing respect to Muḥammad.

Do you hesitate to give alms previously to your private conference? Then if ye do it not (and God

<sup>1</sup> Instead of saying, *Es-salam aleika*, 'Peace be on thee,' the Infidels and Jews said, *Es-sam aleika*, 'a plague, or poison on thee.' See Geiger, p. 18 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *sufficiency* (J. M. R.).

will excuse it in you), at least observe prayer, and pay the stated impost, and obey God and His Apostle: for God is cognisant of your actions. 14.

## LIX. SÚRATU'L-ĪSHR (THE EMIGRATION)

*Madīna*

THE title is taken from the second verse, referring to the expulsion of some Jews. The chapter treats of the distribution of spoils in war and condemns hypocrites.

## Distribution of spoils.

After the spoils of these *Jews* which God hath assigned to his apostle, ye pressed not with horse or camel.<sup>1</sup> But God giveth his apostles power over what he will. God is Almighty.

The spoil taken from the people of the towns and assigned by God to his apostle, belongeth to God, and to the apostle, and to his kindred, and to the orphan, and to the poor, and to the wayfarer, that none of it may circulate among such of you only as are rich: What the apostle hath given you, take: What he hath refused you, refuse: And fear ye God, for God is severe in punishing. 6-7.

Muhammad claims that God had given him the sole distribution of spoils, when gained without horse or camel.

<sup>1</sup> On which account these spoils were entirely assigned to Muhammad, and not divided in the usual manner (J. M. R.).

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If the Qur'án had been sent down on a mountain, it would have split.

Had we sent down this Koran on some mountain, thou wouldst certainly have seen it humbling itself<sup>1</sup> and cleaving asunder for the fear of God. 21.

### Attributes of God.

He is God beside whom there is no God. He knoweth things visible and invisible: He is the Compassionate, the Merciful.

He is God beside whom there is no God: He is the King, the Holy, the Peaceful, the Faithful, the Guardian, the Mighty, the Strong, the Most High! Far be the Glory of God from that which they unite with Him! 22-3.

This is one of the very few passages in which God is called holy (*Quddus*).

## LX. SÚRATU'L-MUMTAḤINA (SHE WHO IS TRIED)

### *Madína*

THE chapter is so called because it directs the women who came over from infidels to be examined whether they were sincere. There are no passages of special importance.

<sup>1</sup> This may be derived from the Rabbinical idea that Mount Sinai was chosen, on account of its lowness, to be the scene of the revelation to Moses, in order to shew that God loves the humble. (J. M. R.).

## LXI. SŪRATU'S-ŞAFF (BATTLE-ARRAY)

*Madīna*

THE title is taken from the fourth verse. The chapter contains an exhortation to Muslims to spend their money and their lives in defence of Islām.

Muslims exhorted to fight.

Verily God loveth those who, as though they were a solid wall, do battle for his cause in sacred lines! 4.

Jesus foretells Muḥammad by the name Aḥmad.

And *remember* when Jesus the son of Mary said, 'O children of Israel! of a truth I am God's apostle to you to confirm the law which was given before me, and to announce an apostle that shall come after me whose name shall be Aḥmad!' <sup>1</sup> But when he (Aḥmad) presented himself with clear proofs of his mission, they said, 'This is manifest sorcery!' 6.

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad had no doubt heard that Jesus had promised a *Paracletos*, John xvi. 7. This title, understood by him, probably from the similarity of sound, as equivalent to *Periclytos*, he applied to himself with reference to his own name Muḥammad (i. e. *praised, glorified*) from the same root and of the same meaning as Aḥmad, also one of the Prophet's names. It may be here remarked that the name Muḥammad, if pronounced Muhammed, 'might be understood by an Arab in an active instead of a passive sense' (Lane, Kor. p. 52). Other passages of Scripture understood by Muslims of their Prophet are Deut. xxxiii. 2, where Paran is said to mean Islam; Isai. xxi. 6, where the 'rider on the ass' is Jesus, the 'rider on the camel' Muḥammad; Matt. xx. 1-16, where the *morning, noon, and even* are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; John iv. 21; 1 John iv. 2, 3, where Muḥammad is said to be the *spirit that is of God*, because he proclaimed that Jesus was a true man and not God (J. M. R.).



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Aḥmad, like Muḥammad, has the meaning of 'Praised'. Muslims hold that in John xvi. 7, where it is said, 'the *Paraclete* shall come', the reference is to Muḥammad. They do so by changing the word *paraklétos* into *periklytos*, meaning Aḥmad. This perversion of the Scriptures cannot be allowed.

### LXII. SÚRATU'L-JUMU'A (THE ASSEMBLY)

•      *Madína*

THE chapter treats of the enmity of the Jews towards Muḥammad, and gives directions about Friday, called the Day of Assembly.

The observance of worship on Friday.

O ye who believe! When ye are summoned to prayer on the day of THE ASSEMBLY,<sup>1</sup> haste to the commemoration of God, and quit your traffic. This, if ye knew it, will be best for you.

And when the prayer is ended, then disperse yourselves abroad and go in quest of the bounties of God; and, that it may be well with you, oft remember God.  
9-10.

Work is to be stopped during the hours of prayer, but may be resumed when the prayers are ended.

<sup>1</sup> Friday; the day on which Muhammad made his first entry into Medina, and the day on which creation was finished (J. M. R.).

## LXIII. SÚRATU'L-MUNÁFIQÚN (THE HYPOCRITES)

THE treacherous designs of the disaffected portion of the inhabitants of Madína are exposed.

## LXIV. SÚRATU'T-TAGHÁBUN (MUTUAL DECEIT)

GOD the Creator; the resurrection: the unity of God are described. Wealth and children must not distract men from the service of God.

## LXV. SÚRATU'T-TALÁQ (DIVORCE)

*Madína*

THE chapter contains laws of divorce, and the Arabs are admonished to believe in God.

The seven storeys of heaven and earth.

It is God who hath created seven heavens and as many earths. The Divine command cometh down through them all, that ye may know that God hath power over all things, and that God in his knowledge embraceth all things! 12.

## LXVI. SÚRATU'T-TAHRÍM (PROHIBITION)

*Madína*

THE title is taken from the first verse. Muḥammad is released from a vow he had taken to please his wives. The jealousies in his harem are noted. Examples of disobedient and good wives

are given. The conduct of Muḥammad, as here described, is condemned by Christians.

Muḥammad relieved from a vow.

WHY, O Prophet! dost thou hold that to be FORBIDDEN which God hath made lawful to thee, from a desire to please thy wives, since God is Lenient, Merciful?

God hath allowed you release from your oaths; and God is your master: and He is the Knowing, Wise.

When the prophet told a recent occurrence as a secret to one of his wives, and when she divulged it and God informed him of this, he acquainted her with part and withheld part. And when he had told her of it, she said, 'Who told thee this?' He said, 'The Knowing, the Sage hath told it me.

'If ye both be turned to God in penitence, for now have your hearts gone astray . . .<sup>1</sup> but if ye conspire against the Prophet, then *know* that God is his Protector, and Gabriel, and every just man among the faithful; and the angels are his helpers besides.

'Haply if he put you both away, his Lord will give him in exchange other wives better than you, Muslims, believers, devout, penitent, obedient, observant of fasting, both known of men and virgins.' 1-5.

Muḥammad having lain with a Coptic slave, called Mary, on the day which was due to Ḥaḥāṣa, she reproached him so sharply that he promised never to touch the maid again; but desired her to keep this secret. Ḥaḥāṣa told this to 'Ayesha. When Muḥammad knew that the secret had been revealed, he upbraided Ḥaḥāṣa, telling her that God had made it known to him.

<sup>1</sup> Supply *God will pardon you* (J. M. R.).

He divorced Ḥaḥāṣa and separated himself from his other wives for a month, spending the time in Mary's apartment. Afterward, he took Ḥaḥāṣa back. The Virgin Mary.

And Mary, the daughter of Imran, who kept her maidenhood, and into whose womb we breathed of our spirit, and who believed in the words of her Lord and His Scriptures, and was one of the devout. 12.

The miraculous conception of Jesus Christ is here acknowledged.

## LXVII. SÚRATU'L-MULK (THE KINGDOM)

*Mecca*

THE chapter derives its name from the mention of 'kingdom' in the first verse. It warns the people of the sin of rejecting the Qur'án especially the doctrines of the resurrection and future judgement.

## LXVIII. SÚRATU'L-QALAM (THE PEN)<sup>1</sup>

*Mecca*

DESCRIPTION of an opponent.

But yield not to the man of oaths, a despicable person.  
Defamer, going about with slander,  
Hinderer of the good, transgressor, criminal,  
Harsh—beside this, impure by birth,  
Though a man of riches and blessed with sons.  
Who when our wondrous verses are recited to him  
saith—'Fables of the ancients.'

We will brand him on the nostrils. 10-17.

<sup>1</sup> This sura is sometimes called Súratu'n-Nún.

## 214 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

### LXIX. SÚRATU'L-ĤÁQQA (THE INEVITABLE)

#### *Mecca*

'INEVITABLE' occurs in the first verse. The principal subject is the certainty of the doctrine of a future judgement.

On the judgement day God's throne will be borne by eight angels.

And the heaven shall cleave asunder, for on that day it shall be fragile ;

And the angels shall be on its sides, and over them on that day eight shall bear up the throne of thy Lord.  
17-18.

The number of angels bearing the throne is said to be usually four ; but the number is doubled on the last day.

Infidels bound with a chain seventy cubits long.

Lay ye hold on him and chain him,

Then at the Hell-fire burn him,

Then into a chain whose length is seventy cubits thrust him ;

For he believed not in God, the Great. 31-4.

The chain is to be wrapt round him, so that he cannot move.

### LXX. SÚRATU'L-MU'ÁRIJ (THE ASCENTS)

#### *Mecca*

THE title is taken from the third verse. Judgements are threatened.

The punishment of those who flee in battle.

For the fire,  
 Dragging by the scalp,  
 Shall claim him who turned his back and went  
 away. 5-7.

### LXXI. SÚRATU NÚH (NOAH)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter contains an account of Noah.

The refusal of the people to give up their idols.

And they said, 'Forsake not your gods, forsake not  
 Wadd nor Sowah,

Nor Yaghuth and Yahuk and Nesr;'

And they caused many to err;—and thou, too, O  
 Muhammad! shalt be the means of increasing only  
 error in the wicked. 22-5

These were five gods worshipped before the  
 flood, and afterwards by the Arabs.

### LXXII. SÚRATU'L-JINN (THE JINNS)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter records the conversion of certain  
 jinns. A professed revelation from God is given  
 respecting the superstitious belief of the Arabs.  
 As already mentioned, the jinns are supposed to  
 be a kind of angels, some good, others evil.

Jinns become Muslims from hearing the Qur'án  
 read by Muḥammad.

SAY: It hath been revealed to me that a company  
 of DJINN<sup>1</sup> listened, and said,—'Verily, we have heard  
 a marvellous discourse (Koran);

<sup>1</sup> This interview with the Djinn took place at Nakhla, probably  
 the 'Wady Mohram' of Burckhardt, midway between Mecca and

## 216 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

It guideth to the truth; wherefore we believed in it, and we will not henceforth join any *being* with our Lord. 1-2.

Prying Jinns driven away.

And the Heavens did we essay, but found them filled with a mighty garrison, and with flaming darts;

And we sat on some of the seats to listen, but whoever listeneth findeth an ambush *ready* for him of flaming darts. 8-9.

The jinns are supposed to be driven away by falling stars. The Qur'án is responsible for this superstition.

Some jinns Muslims; others not.

There are some among us who have resigned themselves to God (the Muslims); and there are others of us who have gone astray. And whoso resigneth himself to God pursueth the way of truth;

But they who go astray from it shall be fuel for Hell.' 14-15.

### LXXIII. SÚRATU'L-MUZZAMMIL

(ENFOLDED)

IN the first verse Muḥammad is called 'enfolding'. He is told to arise and pray. Infidels are threatened, and directions are given about prayer.

Ta'ief, when Muhammad was driven from Mecca. A.D. 620. (J. M. R.).

LXXIV. SÚRATU'L-MUDDATHTHHIR

(ENWRAPPED)

*Mecca*

MUHAMMAD when enwrapped was told by Gabriel to arise and preach. Hell described; infidels rebuked.

Nineteen angels guard hell.

Over it are nineteen *angels*.

None but angels have we made guardians of the fire: <sup>1</sup> nor have we made this to be their number but to perplex the unbelievers, and that they who possess the Scriptures may be certain of the truth of *the Koran*, and that they who believe may increase their faith. 30-1.

It is said that the Jews asked from Muhammad the number of such angels, and that this was the reply, which was conformable to their books.

## LXXV. SÚRATU'L-QIYÁMAT

(THE RESURRECTION)

*Mecca*

THE title expresses the principal subject of the chapter.

<sup>1</sup> This and the three following verses wear the appearance of having been inserted at a later period to meet objections respecting the number of the angels who guard hell, raised by the Jews; perhaps at Medina, as the four classes of persons specified are those whom Muhammad had to deal with in that city, viz., the Jews, Believers, the Hypocrites, or undecided, and Idolaters. These are constantly mentioned together in the Medina Suras (J. M. R.).



## 218 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Muḥammad not to anticipate Gabriel in repeating the Qur'án.

(Move not thy tongue in haste *to follow and master this revelation* : <sup>1</sup>

For we will see to the collecting and the recital of it;  
But when we have recited it, then follow thou the recital,

And, verily, afterwards it shall be ours to make it clear to thee). 16-20.

Gabriel is said to have taught Muḥammad the Qur'án. •

### LXXVI. SÚRATU'L-INSAN (MAN) <sup>2</sup>

THE joys of the Muslim heaven are the chief subject.

The rewards of Muslims in paradise.

And hath rewarded their constancy, with Paradise and silken robes :

Reclining therein on bridal couches, nought shall they know of sun or piercing cold :

Its shades shall be close over them, and low shall its fruits hang down :

And vessels of silver and goblets like flagons shall be borne round among them :

<sup>1</sup> Verses 16-19 are parenthetical, and either an address to Muḥammad by Gabriel desiring him (1) not to be overcome by any fear of being unable to follow and retain the revelation of this particular Sura; (2) or, not to interrupt him, but to await the completion of the entire revelation before he should proceed to its public recital. In either case we are led to the conclusion that, from the first, Muḥammad had formed the plan of promulgating a written book. Comp. Sura xx. 112. (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> This súra is also called Súratu'd-Dahr.

## LXXIX. THOSE WHO TEAR FORTH 219

Flagons of silver whose measure themselves shall mete.  
And there shall they be given to drink of the cup  
tempered with zendjebil (ginger)

From the fount therein whose name is Selsebil (the  
softly flowing).

Aye-blooming yeaths go round among them. When  
thou lookest at them thou wouldest deem them scattered  
pearls;

And when thou seest *this*, thou wilt see delights and  
a vast kingdom:

Their clothing green silk robes and rich brocade:  
with silver bracelets shall they be adorned; and drink  
of a pure beverage shall their Lord give them.

This shall be your recompense. Your efforts shall  
meet with thanks. 12-23.

## LXXVIII. SÚRATU'N-NABÁ' (THE NEWS)

### *Mecca*

THE 'news' refers to the resurrection. The torments of the lost and the joys of believers are described.

## LXXIX. SÚRATU'N-NÁZIFÁT (THOSE WHO

TEAR FORTH)

### *Mecca*

THE chapter derives its name from the first verse. The resurrection and judgement are the principal topics.

The messengers of death.

By those *angels* who DRAG FORTH souls with  
violence,

And by those who with joyous release release them. 1-2.

## 220 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

The angel of death and his assistants will roughly drag away the souls of the wicked, while the good will be taken gently.

### LXXXIII. SÚRATU'T-TATFÍF (THOSE WHO STINT THE MEASURE)<sup>1</sup>

#### *Mecca*

THE use of false weights and measures condemned.  
The joys of believers and misery of infidels.

Against false weights and measures.

Woe to those who STINT the measure :

Who when they take by measure from others, exact the full ;

But when they mete to them or weigh to them, diminish—

What ! have they no thought that they shall be raised again

For the great day ?

The day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds. 1-6.

Acts of the wicked recorded in Sijjín.

Yes ! the register of the wicked is in Sidjín.<sup>2</sup>

And who shall make thee understand what Sidjín is ?

It is a book distinctly written. 7-9.

Sijjín, 'prison', is the name of the book in which the evil deeds of men and jinns are regis-

<sup>1</sup> This súra is also called Súratu'l-Muṭaffifín.

<sup>2</sup> Sidjín is a prison in Hell which gives its name to the register of actions there kept, as Illiyoun, a name of the lofty apartments of Paradise, is transferred to the register of the righteous (J. M. R.).

tered. It is also the name of the dungeon beneath the seventh earth, the residence of Iblis and his host.

XCIV. SÚRATU'L-INSHIRÁH

(HAVE WE NOT OPENED ?)<sup>1</sup>

*Mecca*

MUHAMMAD'S mission made easy.

HAVE we not OPENED thine heart for thee?  
And taken off from thee thy burden,  
Which galled thy back? 1-3.

A Muslim legend says that Gabriel took out Muḥammad's heart and wrung out a black drop of sin, washed it, and filled it with wisdom and love. Some Muslims think that there is a reference to this, but the more sensible reject it.

XCVI. SÚRATU'L-'ALÁQ (CONGEALED BLOOD)

*Mecca*

THE first five verses of this chapter are generally regarded as the first revelation of the Qur'an. Gabriel, in a vision, summoned Muḥammad to the prophetic office. The tradition is that Gabriel commanded Muḥammad to read, to which he replied 'I cannot read.' This was repeated three times, and at last the angel repeated the first five verses.

<sup>1</sup> This sūra is also called Súratu'l-Alam Nashrah.

## 222 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Muḥammad commanded to recite the Qur'án.

RECITE thou, in the name of thy Lord who created ;—  
Created man from CLOTS OF BLOOD :—  
Recite thou ! For thy Lord is the most Beneficent,  
Who hath taught the use of the pen ;—  
Hath taught Man that which he knoweth not. 1-5.

All men are said to have been made of congealed or thick blood except Adam, Eve, and Jesus.

### XCVII. SÚRA'TU'L-QADAR (NIGHT OF POWER)

#### *Mecca*

ON this night it is supposed that God's decrees are given to the angels to be executed. On this night also it is said that the Qur'án was sent down from the highest heaven, in one volume, to the lowest heaven, from whence Gabriel revealed it to Muḥammad as required. Muslims usually spend the night in fasting and prayer. The whole chapter is quoted.

The Night of Power.

VERILY, we have caused It<sup>1</sup> to descend on the night  
of POWER.

And who shall teach thee what the night of power is ?

The night of power excelleth a thousand months :

<sup>1</sup> The Koran, which is now pressed on the Meccans with increased prominence, as will be seen in many succeeding Suras of this period (J. M. R.).

Therein descend the angels and the spirit by permission of their Lord for every matter; <sup>1</sup>

And all is peace till the breaking of the morn. 1-5.

# CV. SÚRATU'L-FÍL (THE ELEPHANT)

## *Mecca*

THE legend which Muḥammad gives as true is that when Abrahā, the Christian king of Yemen, came on an elephant to attack the Ka'ba his army was destroyed by flocks of birds each one of which threw down three stones. It is said that on each stone was the name of the man to be slain by it.

The elephant.

HAST thou not seen <sup>2</sup> how thy Lord dealt with the army of the Elephant?

Did he not cause their stratagem to miscarry?

And he sent against them birds in flocks (ababils),

Claystones did they hurl down upon them,

And he made them like stubble eaten down. 1-5.

<sup>1</sup> The night of Al-Kadr is one of the last ten nights of Ramadhan, and as is commonly believed the seventh of those nights reckoning backward. See Sura xlv. 2. 'Three books are opened on the New Year's Day, one of the perfectly righteous, one of the perfectly wicked, one of the intermediate. The perfectly righteous are inscribed and sealed for life,' etc. Bab. Talm. Rosh. Hash., § 1 (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> This Sura is probably Muhammad's appeal to the Meccans, intended at the same time for his own encouragement, on the ground of their deliverance from the army of Abrahā, the Christian King of Abyssinia, and Arabia Felix, said to have been lost in the year of Muhammad's birth in an expedition against Mecca for the purpose of destroying the Caaba. This army was cut off by small-pox (Wakidi; Hishami), and there is no doubt, as the Arabic word

## CXI. SÚRATU'L-LAHAB (LAHAB)

*Mecca*

ABÚ LAHAB, uncle of Muḥammad, was his bitter enemy. He is here cursed with his wife.

Destruction of Abú Lahab.

LET the hands of ABU LAHAB<sup>1</sup> perish, and let himself perish!

His wealth and his gains shall avail him not.

Burned shall he be at the fiery flame <sup>2</sup>

And his wife laden with fire wood,—

On her neck a rope of palm fibre. 1-5.

CXII. SÚRATU'L-IKHLÁS (DECLARATION  
OF GOD'S UNITY)

*Mecca*

THIS chapter, supposed to be one of the earliest, is declared by a tradition of Muḥammad to be

for small-pox also means 'small stones,' in reference to the hard gravelly feeling of the pustules, what is the true interpretation of the fourth line of this Sura, which, like many other poetical passages in the Koran, has formed the starting point for the most puerile and extravagant legends. *Vide* Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, c. 1. The small-pox first shewed itself in Arabia at the time of the invasion by Abrahā. M. de Hammer *Gemaldesaal*, i. 24. Reiske opusc. *Med. Arabum*. Hala, 1776, p. 8 (J. M. R.).

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly one of the earliest Suras, and refers to the rejection of Muhammad's claim to the prophetic office by his uncle, Abu Lahab, at the instigation of his wife, Omm Djemil, who is said to have strewn the path of Muhammad on one occasion with thorns. The following six Suras, like the two first, have special reference to the difficulties which the Prophet met with in the outset of his career, especially from the rich (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> In allusion to the meaning of Abu Lahab, *father of flame* (J. M. R.).

equal in value to a third part of the whole Qur'án.

Declaration of God's unity.

SAY: He is God alone:  
 God the eternal!  
 He begetteth not, and He is not begotten;  
 And there is none like unto Him. 1-4.

# CXIV. SÚRATU'N-NAS (MEN)

*Mecca*

THIS is the last chapter of the Qur'án as usually arranged.

SAY: I betake me for refuge to the Lord of MEN,  
 The King of men,  
 The God of men,  
 Against the mischief of the stealthily withdrawing  
 whisperer,<sup>1</sup>  
 Who whispereth in man's breast--  
 Against djinn and men. 1-6.

The 'whisperers' denote evil spirits and wicked men.

<sup>1</sup> Satan (J. M. R.).





## REVIEW

### ADMITTED EXCELLENCIES

SIR WILLIAM MUIR thus acknowledges the poetical beauties of the Qur'án: Muḥammad 'being a master in eloquence, his language was cast in the purest and most persuasive style of Arabian oratory. His fine poetical genius exhausted the imagery of nature in the illustration of spiritual truths.'

Súratu'sh-Shamsh (xc) is an example.

By the SUN and his noonday brightness!  
By the Moon when she followeth him!  
By the Day when it revealeth his glory!  
By the Night when it enshroudeth him!  
By the Heaven and Him who built it!  
By the Earth and Him who spread it forth!  
By a Soul and Him who balanced it,  
And breathed into it its wickedness and its piety,  
Blessed now is he who hath kept it pure,  
And undone is he who hath corrupted it! 1-10.

Palmer says: 'Muḥammad speaks with a living voice, his vivid word-painting brings at once before the mind the scene he describes, or conjures up. We can picture his very attitude when, having finished some marvellously told story of the days

of yore, uttered some awful denunciation, or given some glorious promise, he pauses suddenly and says, with bitter disappointment, 'These are the true stories, and there is no god but God; and yet ye turn aside!' <sup>1</sup>

Sell says: 'There is a marked difference in the style of the Madína Súras. The language is prosaic, and the poetic fire, so prominent in the early Súras, has died out; still there are occasional passages of great beauty, which no translation can do justice to.' <sup>2</sup> Such is the famous "throne verse."

God! There is no God but He; the Living, the Eternal; Nor slumber seizeth Him, nor sleep; His, whatsoever is in the Heavens and whatsoever is in the Earth! Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His own permission? He knoweth what *hath been* before them and what *shall be* after them; yet nought of His knowledge shall they grasp, save what He willeth. His Throne reacheth over the Heavens and the Earth, and the upholding of both burdeneth Him not; and He is the High, the Great! 256.

A considerable part of the Qur'án is legislative. Sir William Muir expresses the following general opinion: 'The great bulk naturally relates to subjects which engrossed the attention of Mahomet and his followers—the relation of the sexes, and the laws of inheritance. With certain exceptions

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi. p. lxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Historical Development of the Qur'án*, (3rd ed.) p. 250.

—such as mutilation for robbery; the law of retaliation, which places the sword in the hand of the victorious representative and several very objectionable limitations in the law of evidence, —the code contains nothing greatly open to question.’<sup>1</sup>

It is not enough, however, that a religion should contain some great truths and excellent moral maxims. Muslims do not acknowledge Hinduism to be the true religion, yet it is possible from its sacred books to extract some noble descriptions of God’s greatness as well as beautiful precepts. The question is, are there other things also contained in them which prove that they are *not* from God?

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE QUR’ÁN TO THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES

This is a second preliminary point deserving investigation. Most Muslims believe that the Qur’án regards the Christian Scriptures as corrupt and abrogated. The very opposite is the case. The alleged corruption was an opinion which sprung up at a later period, when Muslims compared the Qur’án and the Scriptures, and the doctrine was invented to account for the discrepancies between the two books.

<sup>1</sup> *The Coran*, pp. 56-7.

## 230 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

Muslims divide the Christian Scriptures into three portions: Taurát, the law, said to be given to Moses; Zabúr, the Psalms, given to David; and the Injíl, the New Testament, given to Jesus Christ, and the Qur'án gives the following testimony to them.

The Taurát was given to Moses. Súratu's-Sajda (xxxii) says:—

We heretofore gave the Book of the law to Moses: have thou no doubt as to our meeting with him:<sup>1</sup> and we appointed it for the guidance of the children of Israel. 23.

Súratu'l-Mú'min (xl) says:—

And of old gave we Moses the guidance, and we made the children of Israel the heritors of the Book,—a guidance and warning to men endued with understanding. 56.

The Zabúr was given to David. Súratu Bani Isrá'il (xvii) says:—

The Lord hath full knowledge of all in the heavens and the earth. Higher gifts have we given to some of the prophets than to others, and the Psalter we gave to David. 56.

The Injíl was given to Jesus Christ. Súratu Áli 'Imrán (iii) says:—

<sup>1</sup> Nöldeke thinks that the word for *meeting* is used here in the same sense as in v. 10 above and Sura xli. 51, and that the clause does not belong to this verse, p. 108, n. (J. M. R.).

And he will teach him the Book, and the Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel; and he shall be an apostle to the children of Israel. 43.

Súratu'l-Má'ida (v) says:—

And in the footsteps of the prophets caused we Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow, confirming the law which was before him: and we gave him the Evangel with its guidance and light, confirmatory of the preceding Law; a guidance and warning to those who fear God. 50.

The Scriptures are called the following names. The Book of God. Súratu'l-Má'ida (v) says:—

Verily, we have sent down the law (Towrat) wherein are guidance and light. By it did the prophets who professed Islam judge the Jews; and the doctors and the teachers *judged* by that portion of the Book of God, of which they were the keepers and the witnesses. 48.

The word of God. Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says:—

Desire ye then that for your sakes the *Jews* should believe? Yet a part of them heard the word of God. 70.

A light and guidance unto men. Súratu'l-An'ám (vi) says:—

SAY: Who sent down the Book which Moses brought, a light and guidance to man. 91.

The lucid book. Súratu's-Şaffát (xxxvii) says:—

And we gave them (Moses and Aaron) each the lucid book. 117.

## 232 SELECTIONS FROM THE QUR'ÁN

A guidance and a mercy. Súratu'l-An'ám (vi) says:—

Then gave we the Book to Moses—complete for him who should do right, and a decision for all matters, and a guidance, and a mercy, that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord. 155.

The Furqán (distinction). This name, applied to the Qur'án, is also given to the Scriptures. Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says:—

And when we gave Moses the Book and the Illumination in order to your guidance. 50.

The inspiration of the Scriptures the same as that of the Qur'án. This is implied by the title al-Furqán, but additional proofs may be given:—

Súratu'sh-Shúrá (xlii) says:—

HA. MIM. AIN. SIN. KAF. Thus unto thee as unto those who preceded thee doth God, the Mighty, the Wise, reveal!

All that is in the Heavens and all that is in the Earth. 1-2.

Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says that there is 'no difference' between the Qur'án and the Scriptures:—

Say ye: 'We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us, and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes: and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus, and that which was given to the prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between any of them: and to God are we resigned (Muslims).' 130.

It will be seen that the Qur'án declares the Scriptures to be 'given by God'; 'the book of God'; 'the word of God'; a 'light and direction unto men'; 'the lucid book'; 'a guidance and a mercy'; 'the Furqán'; that they were 'revealed in like manner as the Qur'án'; that there is no difference between the Qur'án and the Scriptures. What higher testimony can there be?

#### ALLEGED CORRUPTION OF THE SCRIPTURES

Tahrif is the word used by Muslims to denote the supposed corruption of the Scriptures. It means to change, to turn aside from the truth. There are two kinds, namely, Tahrif-i-ma'nawí, a corruption of the meaning; and Tahrif-i-lafzî a corruption of the words.

Sell says:—

'Most Muslims maintain that the latter kind of corruption has taken place, and so do not feel bound to read or study the previous revelations so frequently referred to in the Qur'án. The charge brought against the Jews of corrupting their Scriptures is based on the words: 'Some truly are there among you who torture the Scriptures with their tongues in order that ye may suppose it to be from the Scriptures, yet it is not from the Scripture' [Súratu-Áli 'Imrán (iii) 72]. All the ancient commentators assert that this only proved Tahrif-i-ma'nawí, that is, that the



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Jews misinterpreted what they read . . . Sir Syed Aḥmad Khán in his *Commentary on the Holy Bible* [vol. i. pp. 64-95] endorses this view.<sup>1</sup>

It is true that the Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) accuses some Jews of Madína of copying the Taurát incorrectly that they might sell it at a small price.

Woe to those who with their own hands transcribe the book corruptly and then say 'This is from God', that they may sell it for some mean price. 73.

Sir Syed Aḥmad Khán, after discussing the meaning of similar verses in this súra, and after consulting the most approved Arabic commentaries, delivers this important judgement:—

'From all the foregoing authorities it is evident that, according to the Muhammadan belief, the expression of *corrupting scriptures* (taḥríf) does not imply an actual mutilation of the text; but simply the modifying of words when read to another, or the concealing of passages; or the transgressing of the commandments of God; or misinterpreting or misconstructing the words of God.'<sup>2</sup>

The charge in Súra (ii) 73 of transcribing the Scriptures incorrectly applied, at most, only to a few copies made by Madína Jews. It was they alone who were unfriendly to Muḥammad;

<sup>1</sup> *Faith of Islám*, (3rd ed.) pp. 237-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, vol. i. p. 91.

to them only the assertion of the Qur'án applies. It also proves the existence of genuine copies. The Jewish and Christian Scriptures were in the hands of millions, other than Jews, throughout the Roman and Persian empires. The accusation of tampering with the Scriptures could not apply to them. Besides, nowhere in the Qur'án are *Christians* accused of corrupting the Scriptures—only the *Jews*.

There are two main proofs of the fact that neither Jews nor Christians have corrupted the Scriptures.

1. A comparison of ancient copies of the Scriptures with the present. The Jews, as a nation, were most careful in guarding the purity of the Scriptures. Like the Muslims, they counted the letters. Súratu'l-A'raf (vii) allows that among the Jews there were some truthful men.

Among the people of Moses, there is a certain number who guide others with truth, and practise what is right according to it. 159.

Would such men have altered the Scriptures?

There are manuscript copies of the New Testament written two centuries before Muḥammad, and these copies agree generally with the New Testament as we now have it. There were translations into Greek, Syriac, and Latin made long before the time of Muḥammad, and these also agree with the present Scriptures.

The Taurát, Zabúr, and Injil, circulated in the time of Muḥammad were exactly the same as the present.

2. The testimony of the Qur'án. Texts from the Qur'án have been quoted showing that the Christian Scriptures are put on a level with the Qur'án, and called by one of its principal names, al-Furqán. The Scriptures were in such common use that Muḥammad appealed to them. In Súratu Yúnas (x) he says:—

And if thou art in doubt as to what we have sent down to thee, inquire at those who have read the Scriptures before thee.<sup>1</sup> Now hath the truth come unto thee from thy Lord: be not therefore of those who doubt. 94.

If the Scriptures generally had been corrupted, would Muḥammad have spoken of them as he did? Would he not rather have warned people against their use?

Sir William Muir says that the charge of corrupting the Scriptures is 'throughout baseless'. 'There never was such a suspicion, Mahomet certainly never entertained it; and as little did his immediate followers. Any imputation against Jews and Christians of attempting to corrupt their Scriptures was not even thought of for many years afterwards; not, indeed, until the Maho-

<sup>1</sup> That is, whether thou art not foretold in the Law and Gospel, and whether the Koran is not in unison with, and confirmatory of them. (J. M. R.).

metan doctors, finding the Qur'án to differ from their Scriptures, betook themselves to this most groundless assumption as the simplest mode of escaping the difficulty.<sup>1</sup>

Neither Jews nor Christians, then, tampered with the text of the Scriptures. Muslims are challenged to prove their assertion. On the other hand, it can be plainly shown that Muslims have tried to do so.

A few examples will be given:—

1. An attempt has been made to change the Greek word *Paracletos*, meaning comforter, into *Periclytos*, meaning illustrious.

In the Gospel of St. John xiv. 16, Jesus Christ says:—

I will pray the Father, and He shall give you **another** Comforter (*Paracletos*) that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth.

Muslims, by changing the word *Paracletos*, comforter, into *Periclytos*, illustrious, try to make out that the reference is to Muḥammad as his name Aḥmad comes from the same root (ḥamd) as Muḥammad.

That this is a Muslim corruption is shown as follows:—

1. Manuscripts written centuries before Muḥammad and all the ancient translations of the Scriptures contain *Paracletos*.

<sup>1</sup> *The Testimony of the Coran*, p. 234.

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2. The context shows that it cannot apply to Muḥammad. The disciples of Jesus Christ were to remain in Jerusalem till the Comforter came, which the Injil says took place forty days after Jesus Christ went up to heaven; whereas Muḥammad did not come till several centuries later.<sup>1</sup>

3. Muslims have tried to expunge from the Scriptures the long accounts of the death of Christ given in the four Gospels, and the numerous references to it in other parts of Scripture.

Súratu'n-Nisá' (iv) says:—

And for their saying, 'Verily we have slain the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary. an Apostle of God.' Yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness. And they who differed about him were in doubt concerning him: No sure knowledge had they about him but followed only an opinion, and they did not really slay him, but God took him up to Himself. And God is Mighty, Wise! 156.

The common belief of Muslims is that Jesus Christ did not really die, but that God substituted another like Him who suffered in His stead. On the contrary, in four separate parts of the Injil detailed accounts are given of the death of Christ. Isaiah prophesied, 'He hath poured out his soul unto death' (liii. 12). Daniel foretold, 'Messiah shall be cut off' (ix. 26). Jesus Christ came down from heaven to die. He often said Himself

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller explanation of this, see *Tracts for Muhammadans*, by Dr. Rouse, pp. 1-9.

that He would die: 'I lay down my life for the sheep' (John x. 15); 'My blood is shed for many for the remission of sins' (Matt. xxvi 28). The Christian sacrament of the Lord's Supper is in special remembrance of His death. The fact that Jesus Christ really died has been acknowledged by the whole Christian Church for nearly nineteen centuries, and it is recorded by Roman historians who were heathen.<sup>1</sup>

4. All the Jewish prophets and Jesus Christ, as soon as He is born, are made to talk like Muslims. The Qur'án puts into the mouth of Jewish prophets the very words which Muḥammad used in addressing the Quraish. They were said to have been charged with imposture like himself.

In Súratu Maryam (xix) Jesus Christ, while an infant in the cradle, is made to say:—

It said, <sup>2</sup> 'Verily, I am the servant of God; He hath given me the Book, and He hath made me a prophet;

And He hath made me blessed wherever I may be, and hath enjoined me prayer and almsgiving so long as I shall live. 31-2.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the charge against Jews or Christians of corrupting the Scriptures is groundless, and that it applies only to Muslims.

<sup>1</sup> For other arguments, see *Tracts for Muḥammadans*, by the Rev. Dr. Rouse, pp. 98-102.

<sup>2</sup> See Sura v. 109. (J. M. R.).

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### ALLEGED ABROGATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

It is admitted that the doctrine of abrogation is plainly taught in the Qur'án<sup>1</sup>. Thus Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says:—

Whatever verses we cancel,<sup>2</sup> or cause thee to forget, we bring a better or its like. Knowest thou not that God hath power over all things. 100.

An example may be given from the same Súra. Verse 109 is as follows:—

The East and the West is God's: therefore whichever way ye turn there is the face of God.

The above rightly teaches that God is everywhere, and therefore no Qibla is necessary; but it is considered to be abrogated by verse 145 of the same Súra, appointing the Ka'ba as the Qibla.

And from whatsoever place thou comest forth, turn thy face toward the sacred Mosque.

Jalálú'd-dín says that the number of abrogated verses has been variously estimated at from five to five hundred. He gives a list of twenty, which most commentators acknowledge to be abrogated. This list is given by Hughes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a full description of this dogma, see *Faith of Islám*, (8rd ed.) pp. 83-90.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Súra xvi. 103; iv. 84. The Muslims admit that there are 225 verses cancelled by later ones. The doctrine of 'abrogation' is taught in the Talmud. Thus Hilchoth Mamrim, ii. 1, 2, etc. (J. M. R.).

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of Islám*, p. 520.

The abrogated verses refer only to the teaching of Muhammad himself, but Muslims try to make out that the Qur'án *abrogates the former Scriptures*. This is directly opposed to the teaching of the Qur'án itself, as shown below.

1. The Qur'án expressly declares that it confirms preceding revelations.

Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says:—

And when a Book had come to thee from God, confirming that which they had received already. 88.

SAY: Whoso is the enemy of Gabriel—! or he it is who by God's leave hath caused *the Koran* to descend on thy heart, the confirmation of previous revelations, and guidance, and good tidings to the faithful. 91.

Whoso is an enemy to God or his angels, or to Gabriel, or to Michael, *shall have God as his enemy*: for verily God is an enemy to the Infidels. 92.

Súratu Yúnas (x) says:—

Moreover this Koran could not have been devised by any but God: but it confirmeth what was revealed before it, and is a clearing up of the Scriptures—there is no doubt thereof—from the Lord of all creatures. 38.

It is evident, therefore, that the very *opposite* of the abrogation of the Scriptures is taught in the Qur'án.

2. The Qur'án threatens severe punishment upon those who despise the Scriptures.

Súratu'l-Mú'min (xl) says:—

They who treat 'the Book,' and the message with which we have sent our Sent Ones, as a lie, shall know *the truth* hereafter,



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When the collars shall be on their necks and the chains to drag them into Hell: then in the fire shall they be burned.

Then shall it be said to them, 'Where are they whom ye made the objects of joint worship with God?' They shall say, 'They have vanished away from us. Yea, it was nought on which we called heretofore.' Thus God leadeth the unbelievers astray. 72-4.

**Súratu'n-Nisá' (iv) condemns those who accept the Scriptures only in part.**

Of a truth they who believe not on God and his Apostles, and seek to separate God from his Apostles, and say, 'Some we believe, and some we believe not,' and desire to take a middle way;

These! they are veritable infidels! and for the infidels have we prepared a shameful punishment.

And they who believe on God and his Apostles, and make no difference between them—these! we will bestow on them their reward at last. God is Gracious, Merciful! 149-151.

It will be seen therefore that the Qur'án, so far from abrogating the Scriptures, professes to *confirm* them, and threatens severe punishment on those who despise them or partially reject them.

It should also be remembered that things that happened cannot be abrogated. 'Earlier precepts or laws may be repeated or superseded by later precepts, but facts cannot be cancelled from past history. If Muslims believe in the Injil as inspired, they may alter its precepts by the

Qur'án, but they cannot cancel the fact of Christ's death.<sup>1</sup>

BELIEF IN, AND EXAMINATION OF,  
THE SCRIPTURES INCUMBENT ON ALL MUSLIMS

In Sir William Muir's valuable work, *The Koran: its Composition and Teaching; and the Testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures*,<sup>2</sup> all the texts in the Qur'án relating to the Scriptures are given in Arabic and English, with explanations. One hundred and thirty-one are quoted. The concluding chapter is given in full. It is as follows:

'The sincere and honest Musalman is earnestly invited to examine the subject and to satisfy himself, as he may easily do, that the Bible of the present day is the Bible of the days of Mahomet. He is called upon to revere and honour that sacred Book, even as his Master so uniformly and so unequivocally professed to honour it. He is called upon to believe in it as the inspired word of God, in order that he may obtain the reward promised to the faithful believers. He is cautioned against the neglect or disbelief of it, lest he incur the "ignominious punishment which God hath prepared for the unbelievers", for them "that believe in a part and

<sup>1</sup> Dods' *Mohammed, Buddha and Christ*, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> S. P. C. K. 2s. 6d.

reject a part" of God's word. He is warned against refusing to acknowledge that "perspicuous Book", which is "a light to lighten mankind, a guide and a direction, an admonition to the pious—to them that fear the Lord in secret and tremble at the hour of judgment";—that Revelation which is "complete as to whatever is excellent, and an explanation of every matter, and a mercy, that men may believe in the meeting of their Lord;" for if he does thus reject it, according to the verdict of his own Prophet, "verily he hath wandered into a wide and fatal error." Above all let him beware of blaspheming (like some of the degenerate Musalmans of the present day) that holy book, and of thus sealing his doom as "a transgressing and flagitious unbeliever."

'What fearful audacity is displayed by some of the modern Mahometans (unworthy disciples in this respect of their Prophet!) who ignorantly and blasphemously speak against "the Book which God hath sent down", the holy "Forcan", "the Word of God"!

'As for ourselves, the People of the Book, it is only in conformity with the express inculcation of the Prophet of Islám, that we observe, and hold by, both the Law and the Gospel; and that, in accordance with his challenge, we examine those Scriptures to which he appealed before the people of Arabia as his witness, to see whether or no they bear testimony to his mission. And

it is the sacred duty of every Musalman, in order that he may guard against the possibility of fatal deception, to do the same.

‘Lastly; all honest Muslims are called on to believe, for they cannot consistently disbelieve, that these Scriptures are the inspired “Word of God”, “that they are a light to lighten Mankind”, “an illumination and admonition to the Pious” in fine, that they are calculated to lead those that follow their precepts into the way of peace, and make them wise unto salvation. Why, then, will they neglect so precious a source of spiritual benefit as (the Coran itself being judge) exists in the Old and New Testaments, and shut themselves out from their illumination? Let them search the Scriptures diligently, and they will find the whole tenor of these sacred Books to be “that God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself”;—that Jesus is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life”: “This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”’

#### THE DEFECTS OF THE QUR’ÁN

While the good features of the Qur’án have been acknowledged, truth requires that its defects should also be pointed out.

Muḥammad called himself the ‘Illiterate Prophet’, a phrase which does not necessarily mean

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that he could not read.<sup>1</sup> There is no reason to believe that he ever saw the Bible, although there is one short quotation from it.<sup>2</sup> At that time printing was unknown, and copies of the Scriptures were dear and scarce. It is notorious that serious errors creep into stories handed from mouth to mouth. On the other hand, according to a Latin proverb, 'The written letter remains'. The Jews, as already mentioned, took the greatest care of the Scriptures. They are acknowledged by Muḥammad himself to have been given by God. We must therefore accept them as correct, while the traditions which Muḥammad heard, if they contradict them, must be wrong.

Muḥammad often refers to the prophets and others mentioned in the Bible; but, in nearly every case, he makes mistakes in the accounts he gives of them. Only a few can be noticed:—

1. In Súratu Húd (xi) 45, it is said that one of Noah's sons was drowned. The Bible says that all were saved. See Genesis vii. 13.

2. In the same Súra (xi) 74, Isaac is called the brother of Jacob, whereas he was his father. See Genesis xxv. 19–26.

3. In Súratu Yúsuf (xii) 12, Joseph's brethren ask their father to send him, whereas it was

<sup>1</sup> For a critical study of the phrase see *The Historical Development of the Qur'án*, (3rd ed.) pp. 70–1, and Geiger's *Judaism and Islám* (3rd ed.) p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm xxxvii. 24, quoted in Súratu'l-Anbiyá' (xxi) 105.

his father who sent him. See Genesis xxxvii. 13, 14.

4. In the same Súra (xii) 19, Joseph is said to have been found by travellers, whereas it was his brethren who took him out. See Genesis xxxvii. 26-28.

5. In Súratu'l-Qasaş (xxviii) 8, Moses is said to have been adopted by Pharaoh's wife, whereas it was by his daughter. See Exodus ii. 5 10.

6. In Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) 248, Saul, called Tálút, is confounded with Gideon. See Judges vii.

7. In Súratu Maryam (xix) 23, it is said that Jesus Christ was born under a palm tree, whereas the Bible says it was in a stable. See Luke ii. 4-7.

8. Denial of the death of Christ. This, one of the worst errors of the Qur'án, has already been noticed.

There is a well-known book, called the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, containing a number of stories. In it many foolish fables are recorded as real facts.

Muhammád, although in some respects very able, shared the beliefs of his countrymen in such wonders, for he introduced them into the Qur'án, a book professedly 'revealed by God Himself'. The following are examples:—

In Súratu'l-Má'ida (v) 65, it is said that some people were 'changed into apes and swine'. Can it be believed that God would tempt men to break

the Sabbath by sending fish near the shore on that day and keeping them away on other days? The alleged change into apes and swine is equally incredible.

In *Súratu'l-A'ráf* (vii) 170, it is said that God shook Mount Sinai over the Israelites. In Exodus xix. 16–19, the true account is given. There were thunderings, lightnings, and the sound of a trumpet, but no such absurdity as is asserted in the *Qur'án*.

The *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* says that Solomon had a ring with the incommunicable name of God engraved upon it, by which he wrought his miracles. Without it he was powerless. The *Qur'án* makes the following assertions:—

The wind obeyed Solomon. *Súratu's-Sabá'* (xxxiv) 11 says, 'Unto Solomon did we subject the wind.' *Súratu Šád* (xxxviii) 35 says, 'We subjected wind subject to him; it ran softly at his command, whithersoever he directed it.'

A fountain of molten brass was made to flow for him. See *Súratu's-Sabá'* (xxxiv) 11. According to tradition, this fountain was in Yaman, and flowed three days a month. On the other hand the Bible only says that he made a large molten vessel for washing, ten cubits broad. See 1 Kings vii. 23.

Jinns were made to obey his commands, building palaces, diving for pearls, etc. See *Súratu's-Sabá'* (xxxiv) 11. The Bible only says that he employed a number of labourers.

The lapwing carried Solomon's messages and spoke to him. See *Súratu'n-Naml* (xxvii) 20, 29. The Muslim belief is that Solomon knew the language of beasts and birds.

A Jinn, in the twinkling of an eye, transported to Solomon the throne of the Queen of Saba. See *Súratu'n-Naml* (xxvi) 39.

Solomon stood dead a year leaning on his staff. His death was only discovered by his staff being worm-eaten, which caused him to fall. See *Súratu's-Sabá'* (xxxiv) 11.

It is said that Ezra and his ass died for a hundred years, and when restored to life, their fool was found uncorrupted. See *Súratu'l-Baqara* (ii) 261. No such improbable statement is made in the account of Ezra in the Bible.

Seven sleepers are said to have slept three hundred and ninety-six years in a cave. See also *Súratu'l-Kahf* (xviii) 16-18.

The first foundation of Islám is the Qur'án; the second is the Sunnat, which is based on the *Ḥadith*, or Tradition. It is the belief of Muslims, that Muḥammad in all that he *did* and in all that he *said* was guided by God, and that his words and acts are for ever a divine rule of faith and practice. Sunnat, rule, is the name given to a command or an example set. Muḥammad is reported to have said, 'He who loves not my Sunnat is not my follower. He who in distress holds fast to the Sunnat will receive the reward



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of a hundred martyrs.' In course of time almost innumerable traditions arose. Bukhári collected two hundred thousand of them, of which he rejected one-half, accounting them untrue; of the remainder he accepted only 7,275, declaring the rest to be untrustworthy.<sup>1</sup>

They relate many foolish and childish stories as authentic history.

Muḥammad taught his followers that there are seven heavens, one above another, and seven earths, one beneath another, the distance between each, according to tradition being five hundred years' journey.

Súratu't-Taláq (lxv) says:—

It is God who hath created seven heavens and as many earths. 12.

The earth is supposed by Muslim writers to be a vast plain, but circular. It is surrounded by a great sea, called al-Baḥru'l-Múhít which is bounded by the mountains of Qáf. The extent of the earth is said to be equal to a journey which would take 500 years to accomplish. On the Múhít is the 'Arshu'l-Iblís, or 'Throne of Satan'. The western part of the Múhít is often called the Baḥru'z-Ẓulmát, or 'Sea of Darkness.'<sup>2</sup>

With regard to geography, Muhammadan writers acted like the Hindus. They sat in their houses

<sup>1</sup> See *Faith of Islám* (3rd ed.) pp. 25, 93-101.

<sup>2</sup> Hughes, *Dictionary of Islám*, p. 102.

and framed seas and continents out of their own heads. All the above particulars are pure fables. The earth has no such storeys. It is a globe, round like the moon and floating in space. It is about 25,000 miles in circumference, and people can travel round it in eighty days or less.

Súratu'n-Nahl (xvi) says:—

And He hath thrown firm mountains on the earth,  
lest it move with you. 15.

Muslims suppose that the earth, when first created, was smooth and equal. The angels asked who could stand on such a tottering frame. God fixed it by throwing mountains upon it. This is not the use of mountains. They attract the clouds and bring down rain, and thus are the sources of rivers, like the Ganges and other streams rising in the Himalayas.

Súratu'l-Kahf (xviii) says:—

They will ask thee of Dhoulkarnain [the two-horned<sup>1</sup>].  
Say: I will recite to you an account of him.

We stablished his power upon the earth, and made for him a way to everything. And a route, he followed.

Until when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it to set in a miry fount. 81-4.

<sup>1</sup> Probably Alexander the Great—so called from his expeditions to the East and West. He seems to be regarded in this passage as invested with a divine commission for the extirpation of impiety and idolatry. Comp. Dan. viii, and Tr. Tanith, fol. 32. Hottinger Bibl. Orient. 109 (J. M. R.).

Dhu'l-Qarnain is generally supposed to be Alexander the Great. It is said that he found the sun to set in a 'spring of black mud'. This is probably meant for the 'Sea of Darkness'. As is well known, sunrise and sunset are caused by the earth turning round once in twenty-four hours.

Súratu'l-Hijr (xv) says:—

We have set the signs of the zodiac in the Heavens,  
and adorned and decked them forth for the beholders,  
And We guard them from every stoned Satan. 16-7.

The Qur'án supposes that the devils try to climb to the constellations, to find out what is going on in heaven. They are supposed to be driven away with stones. When a star seems to shoot through the sky, Muslims believe that the angels who keep guard at the constellations, dart it at devils who come too near. The constellations are many millions of miles distant; the shooting stars are near our earth in the atmosphere, and sometimes fall to the ground. They take fire when rushing through the air. The statement in the Qur'án is a fable.

With regard to the Ramadán fast Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says:—

Eat and drink until ye can discern a white thread  
from a black thread by the daybreak: then fast strictly  
till night. 183.

Muhammad was an Arab, who had never travelled far beyond his native country, and was unacquainted with geography. All Muslims, who

have the means, are bound to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. This the Arabs might do, but it is impracticable when required of a world-wide religion. Muhanmad lived in a country where the days and nights are nearly equal all the year round. During the Ramaḍān, Muslims are to fast from the early dawn, when they can distinguish a white thread from a black one, till the same test in the evening. In countries to the far north, the sun does not set for some weeks, but seems only to make circles through the sky. It would be death to observe the Ramaḍān. The true religion should be able to be observed in every part of the earth.

The Muslim conception of God is an imperfect one.

Palgrave, the Arabian traveller, writes of the Muslim view of God as follows: 'God is one in the totality of omnipotent and omnipresent action which acknowledges no rule, standard, or limits, save one soul and absolute will. He himself, sterile in His inaccessible height, neither loving nor enjoying ought save His own and self-measured decree, without son, companion, or councillor, is no less barren for Himself than for His creatures; and His own barrenness and lone egoism in Himself is the cause and rule of His indifferent and unregarding despotism around.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Central and Eastern Arabia*, vol. i. p. 365.

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Kuenen, referring to the overthrow of the Mu'tazilas, Muḥammadan religious reformers, says of the Muslims: 'It was not in the God of the Motazilites, whose essence was righteousness, but in the God of Orthodoxy, the Almighty, subject to no other rule than his own caprice, that they recognized their own and Muḥammad's Allah.'<sup>1</sup>

It is true that the Qur'án has 'the grand conception of one God'. It recognizes fully His greatness, omnipresence, and omniscience, but among the ninety-nine names applied to Him, the loving title of 'Father' is not found. Muslims are never told to address Him as, 'Our Father in heaven', as in the prayer which the Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples.

A clear statement of the idea of God, as taught in Islám, is set forth in *The Muslim Idea of God* (C. L. S. Islám Series—4 annas).

The Qur'án, however, has more than errors of omission.

God is repeatedly said 'to lead men astray'. Thus Súratu'l-A'ráf (vii) says:—

They whom He misleadeth shall be the lost. 177.

There are several passages to the same effect, a few of which may be quoted. Súratu'r-Ra'd (xiii) says:—

Whom God causeth to err no guide shall there be for him. 38. '

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Lectures*, 1882, p. 49.

Súratu'n-Nahl (xvi) says:—

He causeth whom He will to err. 95.

Still worse, God is expressly said to have 'created many jinns and men for hell.'

In Súratu'l-A'raf (vii) God says:—

Moreover many of the Djinn and men have we created for hell. 178.

Compare with the above the declaration of God in the Scriptures: 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.' Ezekiel xxxiii. 11.

The question of fatalism has been much discussed in Islám. Though there are verses which favour free-will,<sup>1</sup> there are many which teach an absolute predestination which has now become a tenet of orthodox Islám.

Sale remarks on this subject thus:—

'The sixth great point of faith which the Muhammadans are taught by the Koran to believe is God's absolute decree and predestination both of good and evil; for the orthodox doctrine is, that whatever hath or shall come to pass in this world, whether it be good or whether it be bad, proceedeth entirely from the divine will, and is irrevocably fixed and recorded from all eternity in the preserved table, God having secretly predetermined not only the adverse and prosperous

<sup>1</sup> See *Faith of Islám* (3rd ed.) p. 274.

fortune of every person in this world, in the most minute particulars, but also his faith or infidelity, his obedience or disobedience, and consequently his everlasting happiness or misery after death, which fate or predestination it is not possible by any foresight or wisdom to avoid.'<sup>1</sup>

Palmer takes the same view:—

'Islám inculcates the doctrine of predestination, every act of every living being having been written down from all eternity in the 'preserved tablet.' Predestination is called *taqdír*, 'meting out', or *qismat*, 'apportioning.' The reconciliation of such a doctrine with the exercise of free-will, and the difficulty if it be accepted, of avoiding the ascription of evil as well as good to God, have furnished materials for never-ending disputes amongst Muslim theologians, and have given rise to innumerable heresies.'<sup>2</sup>

In proof of the above the following quotations may be made.

*Súratu Baní Isrá'íl* (xvii) says:—

And every man's fate have we fastened about his neck: and on the day of resurrection will we bring forth to him a book which shall be proffered to him wide open:

—'Read thy Book: there needeth none but thyself to make out an account against thee this day.' 14-15.

Muhammad used this doctrine to encourage his

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi. p. lxxv.

followers to fight, assuring them that they would die wherever they were.' The Súratu 'Alí 'Imrán (iii) says:—

No one can die except by God's permission, *according to the Book that fixeth the term of life.* 139.

SAY: Had ye remained in your homes, they who were decreed to be slain would have gone forth to the places where they lie. 148.

Hindus believe that every man's fate is written on his forehead by Brahma, and the effects are the same as among the Muslims; it is used as an excuse for every crime. 'It was written on my forehead' or *táqdir*. Dr. Sell, says: 'It is this dark fatalism which, whatever the Qur'án may teach on the subject, is the ruling principle in all Muslim communities. It is this, which makes all Muḥammadan nations decay. Careless of self-improvement, heedless of the need of progress, the Muslim nations, still independent, are in all that relates to the higher aspects of intellectual and civilized life, far behind the nations of the West.'<sup>1</sup>

The Ḥajj or Pilgrimage to Mecca. is the fifth foundation of Islám. Its merits are so great, that every step taken in the direction of the Ka'ba blots out a sin, and he who dies on his way to Mecca is enrolled in the list of martyrs.

This duty is enjoined Súratu'l-Ḥajj (xxii) 28, 30-1.

<sup>1</sup> *The Faith of Islám* (3rd ed.) p. 277.



The black stone, which is kissed, is virtually made an idol. There is a tradition that the Khalifa 'Umar, looking towards it, said, 'By God, I know that thou art only a stone, and canst grant no benefit, canst do no harm. If I had not known that the Prophet kissed thee, I would not have done it; but on account of that, I do it.'

Dods quotes the remarks of four Hanífs.

'Our tribesmen are in error: they have destroyed religion. Are we to encompass a stone which neither hears nor sees, and which neither hurts nor helps us? Let us seek a better faith.'<sup>1</sup>

Kuenen calls it a 'fragment of incomprehensible heathenism taken up undigested into Islám.'<sup>2</sup>

Sell, after giving a detailed account of the ceremonies of the pilgrimage, says:—

It is certainly very curious to find the old pagan customs, superstitious and silly, of the Hajj incorporated into a religion which professes to be monotheistic in principle and iconoclastic in practice. The explanation probably is that Muhammad was an ardent Arab patriot, and in his great anxiety to unite the Arab tribes into a nation, strong to resist their surrounding enemies, he

<sup>1</sup> *Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Hibbert Lectures*, 1882, p. 33.

could not afford to do away with a custom so dear as the Hajj.<sup>1</sup>

Zakát, the legal alms, is the fourth foundation of Islám. In *Súratu'l-Baqara* (ii) it is stated as one of the things essential to salvation.

They who give away their substance in alms, by night and day, in private and in public, shall have their reward with their Lord: no fear shall come on them, neither shall they be put to grief. 274.

God will bring usury to nought, but will increase alms with usury, and God loveth no infidel, or evil person. But they who believe and do the things that are right, and observe the prayers, and pay the legal impost, they shall have their reward with their Lord: no fear shall come on them, neither shall they be put to grief. 276.

The saying is attributed to the *Khalifa* 'Umar that 'prayer carries us half-way to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms procures us admission.'<sup>2</sup>

A very complete statement of the law about Zakát, or almsgiving will be found in Klein's *Religion of Islám*, pp. 156-9.

Hughes says: 'The slavery of Islám is interwoven with the law of marriage, the law of sale, and the law of inheritance, and its abolition would strike at the very foundations of the code of Muḥammadanism. . . . There is no limit to

<sup>1</sup> *Faith of Islám* (3rd ed.) p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to *Islám under the Khalifs of Baghḍād*, p. viii.

the number of slave girls with whom a Muslim may cohabit, and it is the *consecration* of this illimitable indulgence which so popularizes slavery amongst Muḥammadan nations.'<sup>1</sup>

The permission to keep slaves is mentioned in Súratu'l-Mu'árij (lxx).

For there is none safe from the chastisement of their Lord—

And who control their desires,

(Save with their wives or the slaves whom their right hands have won, for there they shall be blameless ;

But whoever indulge their desires beyond this are transgressors) ; 28-32.

Muḥammad, it is true, enjoined Muslims to treat slaves kindly ; but they are under no obligation to release them. The female slaves, as already mentioned, are completely under the control of their masters.

At a time, when the Christian nations of Europe were trying to suppress slavery, Muslims were its great supporters. The Arabs converted a large portion of Central Africa into a slave-hunting ground, though European influence in Africa has now almost entirely restricted their operations.

Enlightened Muslims, through the influence of Christianity, now reprobate slavery. The Rt. Hon. Šyed Amír 'Alī, the leader of the new school of Indian Muslims, says : ' It remains for Muslims

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on Muhammadanism*, pp. 194, 195.

to show the falseness of the aspersions cast on the memory of the great and noble Prophet, by proclaiming in explicit terms that slavery is reprobated by their faith, and discountenanced by their Code.'<sup>1</sup> To this Dods replies: 'Slavery can only be abolished when concubinage is abolished; and when concubinage is abolished, the whole character of Islām, and especially its attitude to its prophet and its sacred book, must be altered.'<sup>2</sup>

It must sadly be confessed that Christian nations have been guilty of holding slaves, but it is directly opposed to the spirit of their religion.

Súratu'l-Mā'ida (v) enjoins the following punishment for theft:—

As for the thief, whether man or woman, cut ye off their right hands. 42.

The above punishment is expressly stated to have been 'appointed by God who is "Mighty, Wise"'. As already mentioned, that punishment is carried out in some Muḥammadan countries to the present day.

Sale remarks as follows: 'The punishment at first sight seems just enough; but the law of Justinian forbidding a thief to be maimed is more reasonable. Stealing being generally the effect of indigence, to cut off that limb would be to deprive

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Teachings of Mohammed*, p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> *Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ*, p. 67.

him of the means of getting his livelihood in an honest manner.'<sup>1</sup>

Did the 'wise God' appoint such a punishment?

Dods says: 'In plain terms, Muḥammad was an ignorant man—a man so ignorant that he did not know his own ignorance. Knowing nothing of the government, policy, or law of Rome, to which all the civilized world has paid its tribute of respect, he presumed that the code of Justinian ought to be superseded by the fragmentary ideas he had jotted down on palm-leaves and mutton bones, and thrown into a chest.'<sup>2</sup>

At Mecca Muḥammad, surrounded by enemies, taught toleration. He was simply a teacher, commissioned to deliver a message. In early days at Madīna, when it was desirable to conciliate the Jews he says in Súratu'l-Baqara (ii):—

Let there be no compulsion in religion. 257.

But even this is not a rule of general application. 'It applies only to Jews, Christians and Parsis, and only to them if they accept the position of *Dhimmis* and pay the *jazya*, or poll-tax. As regards the pagan Arab tribes, the verse is abrogated by the "verse of the killing"'. Súra (ii) 187.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction*, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> *Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ*, p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> *Historical Development of the Qur'an*, p. 97 in which the views of Muslim commentators on this important verse will be found.

The Qur'án contains numerous passages on the duty of fighting for religion. Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) says :—

Fight for the cause of God ; and know that God is He who Heareth, Knoweth. 245.

And fight for the cause of God against those who fight against you : but commit not the injustice of attacking them first : God loveth not such injustice :

And kill them wherever ye shall find them, and eject them from whatever place they have ejected you ; for civil discord<sup>1</sup> is worse than carnage : yet attack them not at the sacred Mosque, unless they attack you therein ; but if they attack you, slay them. Such the reward of the infidels. 187-8.

Fight therefore against them until there be no more civil discord, and the only worship be that of God : but if they desist, then let there be no hostility, save against the wicked.

Súratu't-Tauba (ix) says :—

And when the sacred months are passed, kill those who join other gods with God wherever ye shall find them ; and seize them, besiege them, and lay wait for them with every kind of ambush : but if they shall convert, and observe prayer, and pay the obligatory alms, then let them go their way, for God is Gracious, Merciful. 5.

O Prophet ! contend against the infidels and the hypocrites, and be rigorous with them : Hell shall be their dwelling place ! Wretched the journey thither ! 74.

God do battle with them. 30<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Their driving you out of Mecca ; or *the temptation (to idolatry)*.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to Jews and Christians. For the views of Muslim commentators on the verse, see *The Historical Development of the*

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Súratu Muḥammad (xlvii) says:—

When ye encounter the infidels,<sup>1</sup> strike off their heads till ye have made a great slaughter among them, and *of the rest* make fast the fetters.

And afterwards let there either be free dismissals or ransomings, till the war hath laid down its burdens. 4-5.

Sale says:—

‘The injunction of warring against infidels is repeated in several passages of the Qur’án, and declared to be of high merit in the sight of God, those who are slain fighting in defence of the faith being reckoned martyrs, and promised immediate admission into paradise (Súra iii. 15-23). Hence this duty is greatly magnified by the Muḥammadan divines, who call the sword the key of heaven and hell, and persuade their people that the least drop of blood spilt in the way of God, as it is called, is most acceptable to him, and that the defending the territories of the Muslims for one night is more meritorious than a fast of two months.’<sup>2</sup>

When the Muslim armies went forth to attack the surrounding nations, they offered them three alternatives, Islám, the sword, or tribute.

*Qur'an* (3rd ed.) p. 215. The latest Urdu version of the Qur’án translates the words thus: ‘May God make havoc of them.’

<sup>1</sup> The Meccans and other unbelievers of Muhammad’s time. The Hanefites suppose this law to apply only to the battle of Bedr. The Shiites take it as of universal obligation (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> *Introduction*, p. 218.

Sir William Muir says:—

‘The first brought immediate relief. Acceptance of the faith not only stayed the enemy’s hand, and conferred immunity from the perils of war, but associated the convert with his conquerors in the common brotherhood and in all the privileges of Islām.

‘On the other hand, for those who held to their ancestral faith, there was no escape from the second or the third alternative. If they would avoid the sword, or having wielded it were beaten, they must become tributary. Moreover, the payment of tribute is not the only condition enjoined by the Corán.’

Súratu’t-Tauba (ix) says:—

Make war upon such of those to whom the Scriptures have been given as believe not in God, or in the last day, and who forbid not that which God and His Apostle have forbidden, and who profess not the profession of the truth, until they pay tribute out of hand, and they be humbled. 29.

On this Muir remarks:—

‘The command fell on willing ears. An ample interpretation was given to it. And so it came to pass that though Jews and Christians were on the payment of tribute, tolerated in the profession of their ancestral faith, they were yet subjected to severe humiliation. . . . One must admire the rare tenacity of the Christian faith, which, with but scanty light and hope, held its ground through



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weary ages of insult and depression, and still survives to see the dawning of a brighter day.'<sup>1</sup>

The Rt. Honble. Syed Amír 'Alī says: 'Islam never interfered with the dogmas of any moral faith, never persecuted, never established an Inquisition.'<sup>2</sup> This is a contradiction of one of the best established facts of history. Is it not considered to be persecution to put a Muslim to death if he becomes a Christian?<sup>3</sup>

Christians are charged with religious persecution, and the fact must be sorrowfully admitted. But there is this great difference: Christians have persecuted contrary to the command of their Lord. Muslims, in obedience to the command of their Prophet, are to persecute so long as the world lasts.

Sell says:—

'It may be said that Muḥammad's severe treatment of the Jews was no worse than the persecution of them by the Emperor Heraclius in the year 630; but there is this difference. No one justifies the cruelty of the Roman Emperor, nor are his actions taken as precedents which must be followed by all good Christians. On the other hand, the actions of Muḥammad were, as Muslims must believe, done under supernatural guidance and they form a definite rule of faith—the Sunna,

<sup>1</sup> *Rise and Decline of Islām*, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Teaching of Mohammed*, p. 214.

<sup>3</sup> For the Muslim law on Apostasy, see Klein's *Religion of Islām*, pp. 180-1.

to which all Muḥammadans must conform. His actions, therefore, cannot be justified by comparison with the actions of other men. They belong to a different category; they are according to Muslim theology the result of a divine impulse within him, the deeds of a sinless and, therefore, perfect man. They form the highest ideal and the most perfect conception of life which Islām can present. All apologies for Muḥammad based on the fact that other leaders religious or secular, have done similar deeds are beside the question altogether.'<sup>1</sup>

It was not much, perhaps, for such a man as Mr. Mohammed Webb to make the following assertion at the Chicago Parliament of Religions: 'Now I want to say to you honestly and fairly that polygamy never was and is not a part of the Islamic system'; but it is remarkable that a man of some culture and ability, like the Rt. Honble. Syed Amir 'Alī, should write as follows: 'The greatest and most reprehensible mistake committed by Christian writers is to suppose that Mohammed either adopted or legalized polygamy. . . . No belief can be more false.'<sup>2</sup>

It is a hackneyed saying that 'example is better than precept.' Can it be denied that Muḥammad himself, with nine wives, besides two concubines

<sup>1</sup> *Islām : its rise and progress*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Teaching of Mohammed*, pp. 223-4.

in his harem at his death, was a polygamist? But we have precept as well as example.

A Muslim may have four wives at a time. *Súratu'n-Nisá'* (iv) says:—

And if ye are apprehensive that ye shall not deal fairly with orphans, then, of *other* women who seem good in your eyes, marry *but* two, or three, or four; and if ye *still* fear that ye shall not act equitably, then one only; or the slaves whom ye have acquired: this will make justice on your part easier. Give women their dowry freely; but if of themselves they give up aught thereof to you, then enjoy it as convenient, and profitable. 3.

In *Súratu'l-Mu'árij* (lxx) (The Steps) adultery is forbidden, but unbounded license is allowed with regard to female slaves:—

Who control their desires save with their wives or the slaves whom their right hand have won. 29-30.

On the effects of this license, Sir W. Muir says:—

'Polygamy, with the barbarous institution of servile concubinage, is the worm at the root of Islam—the secret of its decadence. By it the purity and virtue of the family tie are touched; the tone and vigour of the dominant classes are sapped; the body politic becomes weak and languid, excepting for intrigue; and the State itself too often crumbles to pieces, the prey of a doubtful and contested succession. Offspring born by the slave to her proper lord and master is

legitimate, and, as such, shares in the inheritance: but the provision, praiseworthy in itself, affords but an additional ground for division in the house.'<sup>1</sup>

Mr. H. G. Keene, in *The Turks in India*, thus shows the injurious effects of the Muslim system:—

'All Zanana life must be bad for men at all stages of their existence. . . . In youth, it must be ruin to be petted and spoiled by a company of submissive slave-girls. In manhood, it is no less an evil that when a man enters into private life his affections should be put up to auction among foolish, fond competitors, full of mutual jealousies and slanders. We are not left entirely to the conjecture as to the effect of female influence in home life, when it is exerted under those unenlightened and demoralizing conditions. That is, plainly, an element *lying at the root of all the most important features that differentiate progress from stagnation.*'<sup>2</sup>

Few Muslims, it is true, chiefly from poverty or from seeing the evil effects of polygamy, have more than one wife, but the Qur'án sanctions four.

Stanley Lane-Poole has the following remarks on Islámic concubinage:—

'It is not so much in the matter of wives as in that of concubines that Muhammad made an

<sup>1</sup> *The Coran*, p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Sir William Muir in *The Rise and Decline of Islám*, p. 45.

irretrievable mistake. The condition of the female slave in the East is indeed deplorable. She is at the entire mercy of her master, who can do what he pleases with her and her companions; for the Muslim is not restricted in the number of his concubines, as he is in that of his wives. The female white slave is kept solely for the master's sensual gratification, and is sold when he is tired of her, and so she passes from master to master, a very wreck of womanhood. Her condition is a little improved if she bear a son to her tyrant; but even then he is at liberty to refuse to acknowledge the child as his own, though it must be owned he seldom does this. Kind as the Prophet was himself towards bondswomen, one cannot forget the unutterable brutalities which he suffered his followers to inflict upon conquered nations in the taking of slaves. The Muslim soldier was allowed to do as he pleased with any "infidel" woman he might meet with in his victorious march. When one thinks of the thousands of women, mothers and daughters, who must have suffered shame and dishonour by this license, he cannot find words to express his horror. And this cruel indulgence has left its mark on the Muslim character, nay, on the whole character of eastern life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from the Koran*, pp. xci, xcii.

A man may divorce his wife twice and take her back at any time; but if he divorces her a third time, he cannot take her back till she has become the wife of another man, and been divorced by him.<sup>1</sup>

Sir W. Muir has the following remarks on this subject :—

‘In respect of married life, the condition allotted by the Qur’án to woman is that of an inferior dependent creature, destined only for the service of her master, liable to be cast aside without the assignment of a single reason, or the notice of a single hour. While the husband possesses the power of divorce, absolute, immediate, unquestioned, no privilege of a corresponding nature has been reserved for the wife. She hangs on, however unwilling, neglected, or superseded, the perpetual slave of her lord, if such be his will. When actually divorced, she can, indeed, claim her dower, her *hire*, as it is called in the too plain language of the Coran; but the knowledge that the wife can make this claim is at the best a miserable security against capricious taste; and

<sup>1</sup> See Súratu’l-Baqara (ii) 230. The temporary lover is called a *Mustahill*, or one who ‘makes lawful’. This ‘flagrant breach of decency’ (as Sir W. Muir calls it *Life of Mahomet*, vol. iii, p. 306) is felt to be a difficulty by enlightened Muslims. The Rt. Honble. Syed Amir ‘Alí tries to apologize for it (*Spirit of Islám*, p. 348); but declares his conviction that it is abrogated by the following verse—231. No authorities are given for such a view. Anyhow, it is still the Islámic law on the subject and is a most grievous blot on that system and dishonouring to women.

in the case of bondmaids even that imperfect check is wanting. The power of divorce is not the only power that may be exercised by the tyrannical husband. Authority to *confine* and to *beat* his wives is distinctly vested in his discretion.<sup>1</sup>

In Súratu'n-Núr (xxiv) 31, women are prohibited showing even their clothes and ornaments to any except a certain number of near relatives and a few others. The purdah is prescribed in Súratu'l-Aḥzáb (xxxiii) 59.

Sir William Muir has the following remarks on the effects of such laws:—

'This ordinance, and the practices flowing from it, must survive, more or less, so long as the Coran remains the rule of faith. It may appear at first sight, a mere negative evil—a social custom comparatively harmless; but in truth it has a more debilitating effect upon the Moslem race perhaps than anything else, for by it woman is totally withdrawn from her proper place in the social circle. She may, indeed, in the comparatively laxer license of some lands, be seen flitting along the streets or driving in her carriage; but, even so, it is like one belonging to another world—veiled, shrouded, and cut off from intercourse with those around her. . . . The Mahometan nations, for all purposes of common elevation, and for all efforts of philanthropy and

<sup>1</sup> See *The Rise and Decline of Islám.*

liberty, are (as they live in public and beyond the inner recesses of their homes) but a truncated and imperfect exhibition of humanity. They are wanting in one of its constituent parts, the better half, the humanizing and the softening element. And it would be against the nature of things to suppose that the body thus shorn and mutilated can possess in itself the virtue and power of progress, reform, and elevation. The link connecting the family with social and public life is detached, and so neither is *en rapport*, as it should be, with the other. . . . No real growth is possible in free and useful institutions, nor any permanent and healthy force in those great movements which elsewhere tend to uplift the masses and elevate mankind. There may, it is true, be some advance, from time to time, in science and in material prosperity; but the social groundwork for the same is wanting. Sustained progress becomes impossible. Such is the outcome of an attempt to improve upon nature, and banish woman, the help-met of man, from the position assigned by God to her in the world. . . . So long, then, as this polity prevails, the depression of women, as well as their exclusion from the social circle, must injure the health and vitality of the body politic, impair its purity and grace, paralyze vigour, retard progress in the direction of freedom, philanthropy and moral elevation, and generally perpetuate the normal



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state of Mahometan peoples, as one of semi-barbarism'.<sup>1</sup>

Stanley Lane-Poole says:—

'In all civilized and wealthy countries the social system of Islâm exerts a ruinous influence on all classes, and if there is to be any great future for the Muhaminadan world, that system of society must be done away. "The woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink together, dwarfed or god-like, bond or free."'<sup>2</sup>

Lord Cromer says:—

'It cannot be doubted that the seclusion of women exercises a baneful effect on eastern society . . . seclusion, by confining the sphere of woman's interest to a very limited horizon, cramps the intellect and withers the mental development of one-half of the population in Muslim countries.'<sup>3</sup>

'The effects of polygamy are more baneful and far-reaching than those of seclusion. The whole fabric of European society rests upon the preservation of family life. Monogamy fosters family life, polygamy destroys it. The monogamous Christian respects women; the teachings of his religion and the incidents of his religious worship tend to elevate them. He sees in the

<sup>1</sup> *Rise and Decline of Islâm*, pp. 31-3. [Indian Edition.]

<sup>2</sup> Lane's *Selections from the Qur'ân*, p. xcix.

<sup>3</sup> *Modern Egypt*, vol. i, p. 155.

Virgin Mary an ideal of womanhood<sup>1</sup> which would be incomprehensible in a Muslim country. The Muslim, on the other hand, despises woman; both his religion and the example of his Prophet, the history of whose private life has been handed down to him, tend to lower them in his eyes.<sup>1</sup>

Sûratu'r-Rahmân (lv) gives the following description of Paradise:--

But for those who dread the majesty of their Lord shall be two gardens:

Which then of the bounties of your Lord will ye twain<sup>2</sup> deny?

With o'erbranching trees in each:

Which, etc.

In each two fountains flowing:

Which, etc.

In each two kinds of every fruit:

Which, etc.

On couches with-linings of brocade shall they recline, and the fruit of the two gardens shall be within easy reach:

Which, etc.

Therein shall be the damsels with retiring glances, whom nor man nor djinn hath touched before them:

Which, etc.

Like jacinths and pearls:

Which, etc.

Shall the reward of good be aught but good?

Which, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Men and djinn. The verb is in the dual (J. M. R.).

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And beside these shall be two other gardens:<sup>1</sup>

Which, etc.

Of a dark green:

Which, etc.

With gushing fountains in each:

Which, etc.

In each fruits and the palm and the pomegranate:

Which, etc.

In each, the fair, the beauteous ones:

Which, etc.

With large dark eyeballs, kept close in their pavilions:

Which, etc.

Whom man hath never touched, nor any djinn:<sup>2</sup>

Which, etc.

*Their spouses* on soft green cushions and on beautiful carpets shall recline:

Which, etc.

Blessed be the name of thy Lord, full of majesty and glory. 44-78.

For other descriptions, see *Súratu'l-Fáṭir* (xxxv) 30-2; *Súratu's-Şáffát* (xxxvii) 39-49; *Súratu'l-Wáqi'a* (lvi) 11-39: and *Súratu'l-Insán* (lxxvi) 12-22.

<sup>1</sup> One for men, the other for the Genii; or, two for each man and Genius; or, both are for the inferior classes of Muslims. Beidh (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> It should be remarked that these promises of the Houris of Paradise are almost exclusively to be found in Suras written at a time when Muhammad had only a single wife of 60 years of age, and that in all the ten years subsequent to the Hejira, women are only twice mentioned as part of the reward of the faithful. Suras ii. 23 and iv. 60. While in Suras xxxvi. 56; xliii. 70; xiii. 28; xl. 8 the proper wives of the faithful are spoken of as accompanying their husbands into the gardens of bliss (J. M. R.).

The main features of the Muslim heaven are its gardens; its rivers flowing with water, wine and honey, its fruits and flesh of birds; its silk dresses and golden bracelets; its couches with silk linings, adorned with gold and precious stones, on which the blessed recline, while attendants in immortal youth give them wine, which does not inebriate, from silver goblets. But the grand attraction are the beauteous damsels with large black eyes, resembling *pearls* hidden in their shells, having complexions like rubies and pearls.

The hell of the Qur'án casts a lurid light on the Arab love of revenge. Muhammad seems to make God Himself gloat over the misery of the lost.

Súratu'l-Qamar (liv) says:—

Taste ye the touch of hell. 48.

The following are some of the punishments described:—

Súratu'n-Nisá' (iv) says:—

Those who disbelieve our signs we will in the end cast into the fire: so oft as their skins shall be well burnt, we will change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the torment. 59.

Súratu Ibráhím (xiv) has the following:—

Hell is before him: and of tainted water shall he be made to drink:

He shall sup it and scarce swallow it for loathing; and Death shall assail him on every side, but he shall

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not die: and before him shall be seen a grievous torment. 19-20.

Súratu'd-Dukhán (xliv) says:—

Verily the tree of Ez-Zakkoum  
 Shall be the sinner's<sup>1</sup> food:  
 Like dregs of oil shall it boil up in their bellies,  
 Like the boiling of scalding water.  
 Seize ye him, and drag him into the mid-fire;  
 Then pour on his head of the tormenting boiling  
 water. 43-8.

The following doom is pronounced upon Muhammad's bitter enemy, Abú Lahab<sup>2</sup> and his wife. Súratu'l-Lahab (cxi) says:—

LET the hands of ABU LAHAB<sup>3</sup> perish, and let himself perish!  
 His wealth and his gains shall avail him not.  
 Burned shall he be at the fiery flame,<sup>4</sup>  
 And his wife laden with fire wood,—  
 On her neck a rope of palm fibre. 1-5.

In Súratu'z-Zumar (xxxix) the Qur'án is asserted to be consistent:—

<sup>1</sup> The commentators suppose this *sinner* to be Abu Jahl, one of the chief of the Koreish, and the bitter enemy of Muhammad (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> Abú Lahab, an uncle of Muhammad, was one of his bitterest opponents. See *Historical Development of the Qur'án* (3rd ed.) p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly one of the earliest Suras, and refers to the rejection of Muhammad's claim to the prophetic office by his uncle, Abu Lahab, at the instigation of his wife, Omm Djemil, who is said to have strewn the path of Muhammad on one occasion with thorns. The following six Suras, like the two first, have special reference to the difficulties which the Prophet met with in the outset of his career, especially from the rich. (J. M. R.).

<sup>4</sup> The meaning of Abu Lahab is *father of flame*. (J. M. R.).

The best of recitals hath God sent down—a book in unison with itself, and teaching by iteration. 24.

Muhammad claims the alleged freedom of contradictions in the Qur'án to be a proof of its divine origin.

Súratu'n-Nisá' (iv) says :—

Can they not consider the Koran? Were it from any other than God, they would surely have found in it many contradictions. 84.

The fact is that there are many contradictions in the Qur'án. Muhammad sometimes either forgot what he had formerly said or changed his mind. To account for these the convenient doctrine of abrogation was invented. The number of abrogated verses has been variously estimated at between two and three hundred. Palmer says of the Qur'án: 'Revealed "piecemeal," particular passages being often promulgated to decide particular cases, it cannot fail to contain many things that are at variance with, or flatly contradict, others.'<sup>1</sup>

Numerous individual cases might be mentioned. Even one class of súras is contradictory to another. Thus Súratu'l Baqara (ii) 257 says: 'Let there be no compulsion in religion.' On the other hand, Muslims are repeatedly enjoined to 'fight for the religion of God.' And one of the latest utterances

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi, p. lii.

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of the Prophet concerning Jews and Christians is 'God do battle with them' [Súratu't-Tauba (ix) 30]. This is so strong that some Indian Muslims soften the expression into a mere declaration of disgust; but the best Muslims commentators do not accept this mild view. For their opinions, see *The Historical Development of the Qur'an* (3rd. ed.) pp. 215-6.

The doctrine of abrogation is founded on the following verses:—

When we change one verse for another, and God knoweth the best which He revealeth.—Súratu'n-Naḥl (xvi) 103.

Whatever verses we cancel or cause thee to forget, we give thee better in their stead.—Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) 100.

What He pleaseth will God abrogate or confirm, for with Him is the source of revelation.—Súratu'r-Ra'd (xiii) 39.

One very important case of abrogation is the following. When friendship with Jews and Christians was advisable Muḥammad said:—

Verily they who believe (Muslims) and they who follow the Jewish religion and the Christian and the Sabians—whoever of these believeth in God and the last day, and doeth that which is right shall have their reward with their Lord: fear shall not come upon them, nor shall they be grieved. Súratu Hud (xi) 59.

When Jews and Christians could be cast aside this verse came to abrogate the milder one:—

Whoso desireth any other religion than Islām it shall not be accepted of him, and in the next world he shall be of those who perish.—Súratu Âli ‘Imrán (iii) 79

Baidáwí, the commentator, universally accepted as a great authority, says that this verse ‘abrogates all past religions and all which may arise in the future.’ (*Tafsír*, vol. i, p. 164). The change of the Qibla is another instance where changed circumstances led to advisability of the abrogation of a previous revelation. Thus verse one hundred of Súratu’l-Baqara (ii) abrogates verse one hundred and thirty-nine of the same súra. Abrogation is also used for personal matters, such as allowing the Prophet to have more than four wives, e.g. verse forty-nine of Súratu’l-Aḥzáb (xxxiii) abrogates verse fifty-two, so far as Muḥammad himself is concerned. Many other interesting examples are given in the *Faith of Islām*.<sup>1</sup>

In the eighteenth century Muḥammad was described by some writers as a mere impostor, in darker terms than he deserved. Now, largely through the influence of Carlyle, there is an opposite extreme. Carlyle took him as the typical ‘Hero as Prophet’; he is described as ‘the genuine man, the brother of us all, brought visible through twelve centuries—the veritable Son of our common Mother.’<sup>2</sup> Carlyle so little

<sup>1</sup> The *Faith of Islām* (S. P. C. K., 3rd ed.) pp. 83–90.

<sup>2</sup> *Heroes and Hero Worship*, p. 66.



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understood the true nature of Islám that he says, 'On the whole, we will repeat that this Religion of Mahomet's is a kind of Christianity.'<sup>1</sup> Bosworth Smith calls Muḥammad 'a prophet, a very prophet of God.'<sup>2</sup>

It is fully admitted, that, at the beginning of his career, he sincerely believed that he was commissioned by God Himself to proclaim His unity, and to destroy idolatry.

Dods says:—

'For the truth's sake he risked his life, he suffered daily persecution for years, and eventually banishment, the loss of property, the good-will of his fellow-citizens, and of the confidence of his friends—he suffered, in short, as much as any man can suffer short of death, which he only escaped by flight, and yet he unflinchingly proclaimed his message. No bribe, threat, or inducement could silence him.'<sup>3</sup>

But a change came over him. Dr. Wherry says:—

'Nothing is more marked than the inconsistency of human character; nothing more notorious than the inconsistency of Muḥammad's character. How often do men start out with noble purposes in life only to end their lives in disgrace or infamy! Has not every apostacy from the true religion of

<sup>1</sup> *Heroes and Hero Worship*, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Muhammad and Muhammadanism*, p. 344.

<sup>3</sup> *Mohammed, Buddha and Christ*, pp. 17, 18.

God been due to the apparently sincere and honest labour of great men? That much of sincerity characterized the conduct of Muḥammad cannot be denied. That he enunciated much of what is taught in the Qur'ān, believing it to be true, yea, the truth of God, we do not deny. That he wrought great reforms among his countrymen, we do not question. That he was earnest and honest in his hatred of idolatry, we do not dispute. We have no desire to deny to Muḥammad any praise honestly due to him as a man, reformer, a statesman, a general, a hero. We have no need of any such auxiliaries in this controversy. What we do deny is that he was unconscious of deception in the production and proclamation of that 'Revelation' which he called the Qur'ān. What we deliberately assert, after having studied this subject for well nigh a score of years, is that the *prophet of Islām did consciously fabricate speeches and palm them off upon the people as the very word of God.*<sup>1</sup>

The correctness of the above is established by the following considerations:—

1. Muḥammad, being the author of the Qur'ān, claimed to have received it direct from God through the medium of the angel Gabriel.

In Súratu'n-Najm (liii) he thus describes his professed intercourse with Gabriel.\*

<sup>1</sup> *Indian Evangelical Review*, April, 1887, p. 392.

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By the STAR when it setteth,  
Your compatriot erreth not, nor is he led astray,  
Neither speaketh he from mere impulse.  
The *Koran* is no other than a revelation revealed to him:

One terrible in power<sup>1</sup> taught it him,  
Endued with wisdom. 1-6.

God is here made to swear by the star that Muḥammad did not speak of his own will, but what was revealed to him. Gabriel, it is true, is not mentioned, but he is distinctly named in *Súratu'l-Baqara* (ii).

SAY: Whoso is the enemy of Gabriel—For he it is who by God's leave hath caused *the Koran* to descend on thy heart, the confirmation of previous revelations, and guidance, and good tidings to the faithful. 91.

2. The nature of many of the professed revelations show that they were consciously fabricated.

In all other matters Muḥammad showed a remarkably sound mind and clear judgement; in several cases at least he could not have been self-deceived.

Osborn says:—

‘There are modern biographers of the prophet who would have us believe that he was not conscious of falsehood when making these assertions (i.e. that the words of the Qur'án were from God). He was under a hallucination of course, but he believed what he said. *This to*

<sup>1</sup> The Angel Gabriel, to the meaning of whose name, as *the strong one of God*, these words probably allude (J. M. R.).

*me is incredible.* The legends in the Qur'án are derived chiefly from Talmudic sources. Muḥammad must have learned them from some Jew resident in or near Mekka. To work them up into the form of rhymed súras, to put his own peculiar doctrines in the mouth of Jewish patriarchs, the Virgin Mary, and the infant Jesus (who talks like a good Muslim the moment after His birth), must have required time, thought, and labour. It is not possible that the man who had done this could have forgotten all about it, and believed that these legends had been brought to him ready prepared by an angelic visitor. Muḥammad was guilty of falsehood under circumstances when he deemed the end justified the means.<sup>1</sup>

The subject of the sources from which Muḥammad drew a good deal of the Qur'án is too large a one to enter fully upon here. The reader is referred to the Persian book *Yanábi'u'l-Islám* and to the following works in English, *Sources of the Koran* (Tisdall) *al-Qur'án* (Sell, C.L.S.) *Origins of the Qur'án* (C.L.S.)

Muḥammad professed to have a revelation, through Gabriel, whenever it suited his purpose

Muir says:—

‘Messages from heaven were freely brought forward to justify his political conduct, equally

<sup>1</sup> *Islám under the Arabs*, p. 21.

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with his religious precepts. Battles were fought, wholesale executions inflicted, and territories annexed, under pretext of the Almighty's sanction. Nay, even baser actions were not only excused, but encouraged, by the pretended Divine approval or command. A special license was produced, allowing Mahomet a double number of wives; the discreditable affair with Mary the Coptic slave was justified in a separate sūra; and the passion for the wife of his own adopted son and bosom friend, was the subject of an inspired message in which the Prophet's scruples were rebuked by God, a divorce permitted, and marriage with the object of his unhallowed desires enjoined!'<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Muḥammad's own testimony.

His continual denials of forging the Qur'án, seem to show that he was conscious, in some cases at least, of deception.<sup>2</sup>

Palmer thus states the case:—

'The early portions of the Qur'án are the genuine rhapsodies of an enthusiast who believed himself inspired, and Muḥammad himself points to them in the later sūras as irrefragable proofs of the divine origin of his mission. In his later history, however, there are evidences of that tendency to pious fraud which the profession of a prophet necessarily involves. Although commenced

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Mahomet*, vol. iv, p. 318.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Historical Development of the Qur'án* (3rd ed.) p. 57.

in perfect good faith, such a profession must place the enthusiast at last in an embarrassing position, and the very desire to prove the truth of what he himself believes, may reduce him to the alternative of resorting to a pious fraud or of relinquishing all the results which he has previously attained.'<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad allows that the prophets before him worked miracles to show that they were sent by God. • He himself repeatedly acknowledges that he had not that power. In *Súratu l-'Anqabút* (xxix) he says:—

And they say, 'Unless a sign be sent down to him from his Lord. . . .' SAY: Signs are in the power of God alone. I am only a plain spoken warner. 49.

The following reason is assigned for his inability to work miracles. *Súratu Baní Isrá'íl* (xvii) says:—

Nothing hindered us from sending *thee* with the power of working miracles, except that the peoples of old treated them as lies. We gave to Themoud the she-camel before their very eyes, yet they maltreated her! We send not a prophet with miracles but to strike terror. 61.

It is true that Muslim writers contend that the *Qur'án* attributes some miracles to Muhammad. The three principal ones are the splitting of the moon, the night journey, and the conversion

<sup>1</sup> *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i, pp. xlvi, xlvii.

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of the jinns; but there is no proof whatever of these alleged miracles.

The Ḥadīth, or Traditions, ascribe numerous miracles to Muḥammad; but this is directly contrary to his own declarations in the Qur'án.

Muḥammad repeatedly rests his claim to apostleship on the Qur'án itself. In Súratu'l-Baqara (ii) he gives the following challenge:—

And if ye be in doubt as to that which we have sent down to our servant, then produce a Súra like it, and summon your witnesses, beside God, if ye are men of truth:

But if ye do it not, and never shall ye do it, then fear the fire prepared for the infidels, whose fuel is men and stones.<sup>1</sup> 21-2.

The challenge is repeated, and God is said to be the author of the book. Súratu Yúnas (x) says:—

Moreover this Koran could not have been devised by any but God: but it confirmeth what was revealed before it, and is a clearing up of the Scriptures—there is no doubt thereof—from the Lord of all creatures. 38.

Do they say, 'He hath devised it himself?' SAY: Then bring a Sura like it; and call on whom ye can beside God, if ye speak truth. 38-9.

In Súratu Húd (xi) he says:—

If they shall say, '*The Koran* is his own device,'

<sup>1</sup> The statues of false gods (J. M. R.).

SAY: Then bring ten Suras like it<sup>1</sup> of your devising, and call whom ye can to your aid beside God. if ye are men of truth.

But if they answer you not, then know that it hath been sent down to you in the wisdom of God only, and that there is no God but He. Are ye then Muslims. 16-17.

This is not a satisfactory argument. In almost every country there is a book which is confessedly the best in the language. No other Sanskrit poet equals Kalidasa; no other Greek poet can be compared with Homer; among English poets Shakespere is unrivalled. Suppose Shakespere claimed inspiration for his work, and said to the people in proof of it, 'Bring ten dramas like unto mine forged by yourselves,' would this be accepted? A poet's own opinion of his writings must be received with caution.

The Arabs do not know any language but their own. Even if the Qur'án were incomparable in Arabic, it does not follow that it is the best book in the world. For any one to form an opinion,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. verse 37 and Sura ii. 21. It should be observed that the challenge in these passages is not to produce a book which shall equal the Koran in point of poetry or rhetoric, but in the importance of its subject-matter, with reference to the Divine Unity, the future retribution, etc. Upon these topics Muhammad well knew that he had preoccupied the ground. And we may infer from the fragments of the Revelations, or Musailima and Sajáh [Hisam. 946; Attabári (ed. Kosegarten) i. 134, 136, 152; Tab. Agâni, 339], which are mere imitations of the Koran, that he felt this to be the case (J. M. R.).



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he would require to know the most esteemed books in other languages.

Carlyle, who, though not an oriental scholar, is frequently referred to by Muslims as favourable to the claims of Muḥammad says of the Qur'án as a literary production :—

‘Very curious : if one sought for ‘discrepancies of national taste’ here surely were the most eminent instance of that ! We also can read the Qur'án ; our translation of it, by Sale, is known to be a very fair one. I must say, it is as toilsome reading as I ever undertook. A wearisome confused jumble, crude, incondite ; endless iterations, long-mindedness, entanglement ; most crude, incondite ;—insupportable stupidity in short ! Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Qur'án.’<sup>1</sup>

Sell says :—

‘The fact is that the claim is overstated for the challenge was not to produce something equal to the Qur'án in rhetoric or poetry, but with regard to the subject-matter, the unity of God, future retribution, and so on. Now, from the nature of the case, the Quraish could not do this. They could not produce a book, showing, as the Qur'án did, the unity of God, for, as pagans, they did not believe such a dogma . . . as no one could reproduce the individuality of Muḥammad, stamped upon his

<sup>1</sup> *Heroes and Hero Worship*, p. 59.

book, he could safely challenge any one to produce its like. If the superiority claimed is in the form and expression, then Baron de Slane's remark is to the point. He says that if we now examine the Qur'ân by the rules of rhetoric and criticism accepted in Muslim colleges, no doubt the Qur'ân is a perfect model for the principles of rhetoric are drawn from it.<sup>1</sup>

Nöldeke, the finest Arabic scholar of modern times, says:—

‘On the whole, while many parts of the Qur'ân undoubtedly have considerable rhetorical power, even over an unbelieving reader, the book, aesthetically considered, is by no means a first-rate performance . . . Indispensable links, both in expression and in the sequence of events, are often omitted, so that to understand these histories is sometimes far easier for us than for those who heard them first, because we know most of them from better sources . . . The connexion of ideas is extremely loose, and even the syntax betrays great awkwardness’.<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ân, then, instead of being a proof of Muḥammad's mission from God, is the reverse. The reasons for this statement have been given in the preceding sections.

<sup>1</sup> *The Historical Development of the Qur'ân* (3rd ed.) pp. 64-5. For Palmer's view on the subject, see *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi, pp. 55-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Sketches from Eastern History*, pp. 34-3.

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The results of the influence of the Qur'ân on national life and character may be seen from a passing glance at Arabia and Morocco, countries where there has been little or no outside influence.

Palgrave, a well-known English traveller, says:—

‘When the Qur'ân and Mecca shall have disappeared from Arabia, then, and only then, can we expect to see the Arabs assume that place in the rank of civilization from which Muḥammad and his book have more than any other individual cause kept them back.’<sup>1</sup>

Sell says:—

‘If Arabs went forth inspired by the teaching of Muḥammad to “elevate and civilize”, we may surely look to Arabia to see some fruit of it all. Yet that land, the centre of Islām under its most revered teachers, the Muftis of the great legal systems, the home of its most sacred spot, a pilgrimage to which ensures salvation: the land in which its sacred language—the language of the uncreated Qur'ân and so of heaven—is the mother-tongue of the people; this land is now hopelessly behind almost every other land, Christian or non-Christian, in the world to-day.’<sup>2</sup>

Morocco is a country which affords another illustration of Muslim rule, unaffected by Christian influence, extending over twelve centuries. It was

<sup>1</sup> *Central and Eastern Arabia*, vol. i, 175.

<sup>2</sup> *Faith of Islām* (S.P.C.K.), p. 225.

conquered by the Arabs about A.D. 680, and has been under them ever since.

'The Moors in Spain attained to some degree of culture, which they entirely lost when they retired to Africa. A modern Muslim writer accounts for this by saying that "the retention of culture depends on the surroundings."<sup>1</sup> a statement which unwittingly admits that not to Islām, but to the Christian and Jewish culture of Spain, the Moors owed what they then had gained'.<sup>2</sup>

Meakin, an accepted authority on Moroccan affairs, describes the oppressions of officials thus: 'All sorts of pretexts and false charges are employed to bring the wealthy unprotected people within their grasp, and often such are tortured to extort their riches from them.'<sup>3</sup> Of the prisons he says: 'In the prisons, which are reeking, unhealthy courtyards or cellars, without any furniture or even a supply of water, usually overcrowded, many are thrust into ankle, wrist or neck rings of heavy iron.'<sup>4</sup> Then follows an account of the cruel tortures used.

Some have considered that Islām has benefited at least the negro races by whom it has been

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century*, September 1895, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> *Faith of Islām* (3rd. ed.) p. 225.

<sup>3</sup> *The Moorish Empire*, p. 222.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 233.

embraced. Captain Lugard, in *Tropical Africa*, from practical knowledge, thus states its effects:—

‘It has abolished cannibalism and the grosser and more cruel rites of paganism, and instituted government under recognized authority and a form of theocratic law, and in some regions, as in East Africa, it has promoted temperance. These things it has done where its purer forms have taken hold on the people. But it has worked much harm as well. The Mohamedan negro is inflated with a sense of his superiority, which has taught him a supreme contempt for human life outside the pale of his own creed. The pagan is to him as a beast of the field, fit but for slaughter or slavery. His religion has not taught him to condemn deceit, treachery, or cruelty. Having raised him somewhat above the chaos and the superstition of the pagan, it has left him with no higher aspirations, the victim of bigotry and exclusion, the scourge of non-Mohamedan humanity. And then it has tended to deteriorate by laxity in those principles which ennobled it and gave it vitality, and to incorporate with itself those very superstitions and vices which it was its mission to destroy.’

Osborn says:—

‘When Islám penetrates the countries lower in the scale of humanity than were the Arabs of Muḥammad’s day, it suffices to elevate them to that level. But it does so at a tremendous cost.

It reproduces in its new converts the characteristics of its first—their impenetrable self-esteem, their unintelligent scorn, and blind hatred of all other creeds. And thus the capacity for all further advance is destroyed; the mind is obdurately shut to the entrance of any purer light.’<sup>1</sup>

Sell says:—

‘It may be admitted that when Islām comes to a pagan race, low in the scale of civilization, it does some good. It puts away infanticide, cannibalism, human sacrifice and fetish worship. It introduces some ideas of law and order. It raises such a tribe to a higher level, but that level is, compared to that to which a purer faith and higher moral system could raise it, a low level after all. . . . The law laid down for Arabs of the seventh century must be the law for the African Muslims of the twentieth, and so they pass into the condition of unprogressive communities, and miss the opportunity, which otherwise might have been theirs, of sharing the light and the liberty found only in the progressive Christian nations of the world.’<sup>2</sup>

To the remarks on the condition of Arabia it may be objected that under the Khalifas of Baghdad and the Moors in Spain, Muslims, for a time, were the most enlightened nations in the world. The Rt. Honble. Syed Amir ‘Alī asserts that,

• <sup>1</sup> *Islām under the Arabs*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Islām: its Rise and Progress*, pp. 86, 87.

‘Islám then introduced into the modern world civilization, philosophy, the arts and the sciences, everything that ennobles the heart and elevates the mind. It inaugurated the reign of intellectual liberty.’<sup>1</sup>

The curious thing about such statements is that the fact is ignored that when the Moors left the environment of Christian and Jewish influence, and in Africa lived apart from other civilizations, they fell into the semi-barbarous condition in which they have remained until this day.

It is true that, under the ‘Abbásides, the Muslims, for a time, attained a comparatively high state of civilization; but it arose chiefly from the same cause which led to the revival of learning in Europe—through the influence of Greek writers. The Khalifas invited to their courts eminent scholars of the Byzantine empire. Renan says that it would not be much of an exaggeration to affirm that at no epoch did any learned Musalmán know Greek. All studies were pursued by means of translations, and these translations generally had as their authors Christian Syrians.<sup>2</sup> ‘As for the studies which the Arabs borrowed from the Greeks through the intervention of the Syrians, such as logic, metaphysics, astronomy,

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Teaching of Muhammad*, p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Faith of Islám* (3d. ed.) p. 282.

medicine, the trace of a Greek origin is perfectly apparent; a crowd of technical Greek words are transcribed or translated in such a manner as to make it possible to divine the original word at the first glance. The name of the science is almost always Greek; the divisions and categories are all Greek'.<sup>1</sup>

The astronomy of the Arabs was mainly astrology; their medicine was substantially that of Hippocrates and Galen; their chemistry was alchemy, the vain search for the supposed philosopher's stone which was to transmute the baser metals into gold. What are called the Arabic numerals are unquestionably of Indian origin. It is granted that there were some eminent writers among the Arabs, and that they made advances in certain directions; but the impulse came from without.

Sell concludes an investigation into the influence of Muslim philosophy thus: 'For four hundred years the contest raged, a contest such as Islám has never since seen. This great effort to bring it into accord with the main stream of human thought, to introduce into it some element of progress, utterly failed. The lesson is plain. Any project of reform in Islám which admits its fundamental principles must fail. Revolution, not reform, is the only hope for the permanence of a

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire Generale des Langues Sémitiques*, vol. i, pp. 378, 9.



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Muslim state when it enters into the circle of civilized nations.'<sup>1</sup>

Lord Houghton says of the Qur'án :—

•   Muḥammad's truth lay in a holy book,  
      Christ's in a Sacred Life.

So while the world rolls on from change to  
      change,

      And realms of thought expand,  
The Letter stands without expanse or range,  
Stiff as a dead man's hand.

While, as the life-blood fills the growing  
      form,

      The Spirit Christ has shed  
Flows through the ripening ages, rich and  
      warm,

      More felt than heard or read.<sup>2</sup>

The Aligarh Institute and the Oriental College, founded by the late Sir Syed Aḥmad Khán are indirectly the result of Christian influence and of Western learning. Otherwise the course of study would have been the same as in the Calcutta Madrasa in its former days. The spirit of modernism, now spreading amongst Indian Muslims who have been educated in English, and so brought into contact with Christian thought and ideals, is much to be thankful for; but it is not the unaided result of Islām. If we want to see that

<sup>1</sup> *Faith of Islām* (3rd ed.) pp. 281–91.

<sup>2</sup> *Palm Leaves*, 38.

system at work undisturbed by any Christian influence we find it in the still rude and barbarous state of Afghanistán.

Muslims who are unacquainted with history are ignorant of the state of Muḥammadan nations. Some have been more highly favoured and have received an education which enables them to form a better judgement. Such ought to set to their fellow-religionists an example which they may safely follow. Islām is still 'stiff as a dead man's hand'. All its customs, even those which are felt to be detrimental to the highest interests of humanity, stand on the same divine authority. The social habits are so intertwined with the religion that to separate them must mean the destruction of both. Stanley Lane-Poole says:— 'In all civilized and wealthy countries the social system of Islām exerts a ruinous influence on all classes, and if there is to be any great future for the Muḥammadan world, that system of society must be done away.'<sup>1</sup>

Osborn says:—

'Muḥammad found his ideal of human existence in the customs of the desert Arabs. To the end of time men were to venerate the black stone; to the end of time they were to practise slavery and polygamy, and believe in the doctrine of fatalism.' The last revelation had come down from

<sup>1</sup> Lane's *Selections from the Qur'án*, Introduction, p. xcix.

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heaven. The last prophet had appeared among men. The Qur'án was the only and all-sufficient guide, and no change in its precepts was possible without the guilt of disobedience to a divine ordinance.'<sup>1</sup>

The same writer, after careful study, says:—

‘There are to be found in Muḥammadan history all the elements of greatness in faith, courage, endurance, self-sacrifice. But enclosed within the narrow walls of a rude theology and a barbarous polity, from which the capacity to grow and the liberty to modify have been sternly cut off, they work no deliverance upon the earth. They are strong only for destruction. When that work is over, they either prey upon each other, or beat themselves to death against the bars of their own prison house. No permanent dwelling-place can be erected on a foundation of sand; and no durable or humanizing polity upon a foundation of fatalism, despotism, polygamy, and slavery.’<sup>2</sup>

Lord Cromer, speaking with great admiration of certain Egyptians of high religious character, and of their earnest desire for reform in the law and practice of Islám, yet says: ‘Let no practical politician think that they have a plan capable of resuscitating a body, which is, indeed, dead, and which may linger on for centuries, but which

<sup>1</sup> *Islám under the Khalifs of Bagdad*. Preface, vii.

<sup>2</sup> Osborn's *Islám under the Arabs*, pp. 94–5.

is nevertheless politically and socially moribund, and whose gradual decay cannot be arrested by any modern palliatives however skilfully they may be applied.<sup>1</sup>

The most important of all questions is, What must I do to be saved? It matters comparatively little whether we are rich or poor in this life, our grand inquiry should be, How can I avoid an eternity of misery and enjoy everlasting happiness in God's holy Heaven? Is the Qur'án a safe guide in this question of questions?

The earnest attention of all thoughtful Muslims is invited to the steps in the following argument:—

1. All have sinned. The Qur'án fully acknowledges the sinfulness of man.

Muḥammad himself is repeatedly said to have sinned, and he is told to ask pardon.

Súratu'l-Mú'min (xl) says:—

Seek pardon for this fault. 57.

Súratu Muḥammad (xlvii) says:—

- Know, then, that there is no god but God: and ask pardon for thy sin, and for believers, both men and women. 21.

Súratu'n-Naṣr (cx) says:—

Then utter the praise of thy Lord, implore His pardon; for He loveth to turn *in mercy*.

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Egypt*, vol. ii, p. 184.

Other passages of a similar character might be quoted on the subject of sin.<sup>1</sup>

Tradition also represents Muḥammad as seeking pardon for sin. The 'Mishqātu'l-Musábiḥ' X, chapter iii, has the following: 'Verily I ask pardon of God and turn from sin towards Him more than seventy times daily.' 'I ask pardon of God one hundred times a day.'

If Muslims must confess that even Muḥammad was a sinner, how much more must they allow that all other men are sinners. This is also the teaching of the Bible: 'All have sinned' (Romans iii. 23.) 'There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.' (Ecclesiastes vii. 20.)

Most men are so wicked that they do not think of their sins. Many regard as sins only those crimes, as theft, murder, etc., which would cause them to be punished by an earthly judge; but God looks to our thoughts and words as well as our actions. The heart is the fountain from which our actions proceed.

Jesus Christ, the great Teacher, says, 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.'

The Muslim commentators try to evade the plain and direct meaning of the word used in the verses just quoted. The author of *The Faith of Islām* (pp. 246-9), shows that the Arabic word for sin (dhanb) used of Muḥammad's sin, is the same word he uses for the sins of other people. 'Others have owned their sins (dhúnúb).—Súratu't-Tauba (ix) 103.

(*Matthew* v. 28.) God also looks to our words. Jesus Christ says: 'Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.' (*Matthew* xii. 36.)

It is impossible to tell whether a garment is clean or dirty by examining it in a dark room. To judge properly, it should be taken out in the sun. Somewhat in like manner, we must view ourselves, as it were, in the dazzling splendour of God's presence. A holy man of old said to God, 'Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee; our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance.' Another confessed, 'We are all as an unclean thing; and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' A third said, 'I have heard of Thee, by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.'

2. Sin deserves punishment. No country could prosper if people could break its laws with impunity; it would soon be full of crime. Much more must the great Lord of the universe punish those who transgress His righteous laws. From the earliest times and among all nations, it has been felt that sin deserves punishment.

Some Muslims suppose that the Qur'án teaches that all must pass through hell. *Súratu Maryam* (xix) says:—

Man saith: 'What! after I am dead, shall I in the end be brought forth alive?'

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Doth not man bear in mind that we made him at first, when he was nought?

And I swear by thy Lord, we will surely gather together them and the Satans: then will we set them on their knees round Hell. 67-9.

Súratu T'á Há (xx) certainly condemns the sinner to hell. It says:—

And the magicians fell down and worshipped. They said, 'We believe in the Lord of Aaron and of Moses.

Said Pharaoh, 'Believe ye on him ere I give you leave? He, in sooth, is your Master who hath taught you magic. I will therefore cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you on trunks of the palm, and assuredly shall ye learn which of us is severest in punishing, and who is the more abiding.'<sup>1</sup>

They said, 'We will not have more regard to thee than to the clear tokens which have come to us, or than to Him who hath made us: doom the doom thou wilt: Thou canst only doom as to this present life: of a truth we have believed on our Lord that he may pardon us our sins and the sorcery to which thou hast forced us, for God is better, and more abiding than thou.'<sup>2</sup> 14-16.

3. Supposed good deeds cannot counterbalance evil deeds. The Qur'án teaches that good and evil deeds are put into a scale and balanced. Súratu'l-Mú'mínún (xxiii) says:—

And when the trumpet shall be sounded, the ties of kindred between them shall cease on that day; neither shall they ask each other's help.

<sup>1</sup> In punishing. Beidh (J. M. R.).

<sup>2</sup> To recompense. Beidh (J. M. R.).

They whose balances shall be heavy, shall be the blest.  
But they whose balances shall be light,—these are  
they who shall lose their souls, abiding in hell for ever:  
The fire shall scorch their faces, and their lips shall  
quiver therein:—

—‘What! Were not my signs rehearsed unto you?  
and did ye not treat them as lies?’

They shall say, ‘O our Lord! our ill-fortune prevailed  
against us, and we became an erring people. .

O our Lord! Bring us forth hence: if we go back  
again to our sins, we shall indeed be evil doers.’

He will say; ‘Be ye driven down into it; and, address  
me not.’ 103-10.

The principle of the Qur’án is wrong. Suppose  
a man is accused of theft before a judge, and he  
replies that he only stole on four days during  
the last month, while on twenty-five days he  
lived honestly? Would this excuse be accepted?  
If a man committed only one murder and during  
the rest of his life did not harm any one, would  
he be pardoned on this account?

As already shown, our sinful actions are count-  
less, and they cannot be atoned for by our few  
supposed good deeds. Unless there is a Saviour,  
all must go to the place of punishment.

4. The Qur’án denies any intercession at the  
day of judgment: each person must bear his  
own sins.

Súratu’l-Baqara (ii) says:—

And fear ye the day when soul shall not satisfy for  
soul at all, nor shall any intercession be accepted from



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them, nor shall any ransom be taken, neither shall they be helped. 45.

Súratu'l An'ám (vi) says:—

No soul shall labour but for itself; and no burdened one shall bear another's burden. 164.

Súratu'n-Nahl (xvi) says:—

On a certain day shall every soul come to plead for itself and every soul shall be repaid according to its deeds. 112.

Muslims think that Muḥammad will intercede for them at the day of judgment. In the preface to the *Gulistán*, he is called 'Mediator of both worlds', 'accepted intercessor'. This is contrary both to the above verses and to reason.

One sinner cannot intercede for another. It has been shown that, even according to the Qur'án, Muḥammad himself was a sinner; that all have sinned times and ways without number; that sins deserve punishment; that supposed good deeds cannot balance evil ones; that according to the Qur'án at the day of judgment, no intercession is allowed, that each soul must bear the burden of its own guilt. It is evident, therefore, that the Qur'án does not hold out the hope of pardon; that all must pass through hell.

Although the term 'Father', does not occur in the Qur'án among the ninety-nine names given to God, we can feel assured that He is our great Father in heaven, and that He regards us with

a father's love. We have, however, been disobedient rebellious children.

God thus complains of our conduct, contrasting the gratitude of the very beasts with the regardlessness of man. 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but my people doth not know, doth not consider.' Isaiah i. 2-3.

It sometimes happens that an ungrateful, wicked son leaves his father's house, and lives among companions like himself, never thinking of his father, and caring nothing about him. Although men have thus acted towards their Heavenly Father, His heart still yearns over them, and He would welcome their return. His call to us is, 'Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding.' 'Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, Thou art the guide of my youth.'

The great difficulty is to reconcile God's justice and mercy.

In *Sûratu'l-Fâtiha* (i) it is said that God is 'The compassionate, the merciful! King on the day of reckoning.' He is 'merciful'; therefore only can we be saved. We are sinners, and if God does not, in His mercy, pardon our sins, we cannot escape hell. But how can God, who is 'King on the day of reckoning', show mercy to us sinners?

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Suppose a man has committed murder, however merciful the Judge may be he is unable to show mercy to him. He must judge according to the law. Though he may love mercy himself, he must condemn the murderer to be hanged. We are all sinners, we sin every day. Who can reckon the number of our sins? Then how can God, one of whose names is al-'Ádil, the Just, the 'King on the day of reckoning', who at the last day will judge all men according to their works be also ar-Rahím, the Merciful?

The solution of this is found in the Injíl. It is written there that the Lord Jesus Christ gave His life for sinners; by His death He made atonement for sin, and by virtue of that atonement God can be merciful to sinners. For Jesus took the burden of our sins. He suffered the punishment which sinners deserved. By sin we had become debtors to God; but Jesus paid the debt and freed us. Those who rely on Him are freed from sin through Him. Thus only through Jesus Christ can God, the 'Lord of the Day of Judgment', be also merciful, as already shown.

One of the greatest errors of the Qur'án is to deny the death of Christ. Súratu'n-Nisá' (iv) 157 says that the Jews 'slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness. They did not really kill him, but God took him up unto himself.' The Qur'án here contradicts the Taurát, Zabúr, and Injíl, which Muḥammad

llows were given by God. The Taurát and Zabúr, foretold that Jesus was to die; and in the Injíl we have an account of His death. God cannot contradict Himself; the Taurát, Zabúr, and Injíl must be true.

It is through the death of Christ that Christians hope for pardon, and through Him alone can God show mercy. Jesus says. 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father (that is God) but by me'. There is no other way to heaven. This is the true Islám.

By rejecting Jesus Christ as their Saviour and denying His death, Muslims hope to be saved by their own good works. This doctrine is very pleasing to man's natural pride; but it has been shown to be impossible. 'All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags', and clothed in them we cannot appear in God's sight. We need the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a great stumbling-block to Muslims. Christians hold as firmly as they do the unity of God. Many Muslims have erroneous ideas of the Trinity. Some suppose it to consist of God, the Virgin Mary, and Jesus. On the contrary, the Three are God the Father, the Creator; God the Son, the Redeemer; and God the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. These Three, however, are one God. This is acknowledged to be a great mystery, but there are many other mysteries which we cannot comprehend;

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such as God's omnipresence and omniscience, His creating all things out of nothing, etc. Truly understood, the doctrine of the Trinity is most glorious and comforting.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus or Muḥammad, on which will you rely? Consider on which we can rely for the salvation of our souls.

Muḥammad was born in the ordinary way; 'Abdu'lláh was his father, and Amina his mother. Before his birth no angel brought the tidings of it to his father or mother. But previous to the birth of Jesus, the angel Gabriel gave tidings of His greatness. He was born by the power of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He has received the name Spirit of God (Ruḥu'lláh) and Word of God (Kalámu'lláh).

Again, compare their lives. Muḥammad confessed himself a sinner. He was full of sensual desires, shown by the number of his wives, including even Zainab, the wife of his adopted son Zaid. On the other hand, Jesus lived a life of spotless purity. According to historians Muḥammad was present in twenty-seven battles, and by his command his followers made thirty-eight expeditions, chiefly for plunder. He caused the assassination of several persons; he ordered the execution in cold blood of seven hundred Jewish

<sup>1</sup> See a book on this subject, issued in the Islam Series by the C. L. S.

prisoners of the Quraiza tribe. Jesus Christ came down from heaven not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. When one of His disciples wished to defend Him from being seized by wicked men, He said, 'Put up thy sword into the sheath'. When dying on the cross He prayed for His murderers saying, 'Father, forgive them; they know not what they do'.

Muhammad, by his own confession, never wrought a miracle; Jesus did many wonderful works, He gave sight to the blind, healed lepers, raised the dead, and the storm ceased at His command. Muhammad died like other men, and his body has turned to dust. Jesus Christ, it is true, died once to make an atonement for sin; but He rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, where He ever liveth to benefit His people.

Of what use would be the intercession of Muhammad? We need a holy, sinless intercessor. And who is that intercessor? It is Jesus Christ. The apostle John says, 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father (that is God), Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' Another part of the Injil says, 'He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

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Jesus Christ Himself said, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light' (Matt xi. 28-30). Through His death you can obtain pardon of your sins, and by His help you will be enabled to strive against sin, and to overcome Satan. He will deliver you from all evil, and will intercede with God the Father for you, and when He comes at the Last Day to judge the world, He will receive you as His people, and will bid you enter into His infinite joy in heaven. He says, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. He is the only way to heaven, and if you believe in Him and take Him to be your Saviour and Lord, you will certainly go there.'

